

E V E L Y N ;

OR,

A JOURNEY

PROM

S T O C K H O L M T O R O M E

IN 1847-48.

BY MISS BUNBURY.

"Time, as it courses onward, still unrolls the volume of concealment."

COLERIDGE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

L O N D O N :

RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1849.

**Printed by J. & H. COX (BROTHERS), 74 & 75, Great Queen Street,
Lincoln's-Inn Fields.**

E V E L Y N.

CHAPTER I.

GMUNDEN.

IT was night when we entered Das Goldene Schiff; we only enjoyed our supper of lake trout and nice wine, said "Gut Nacht," and went to bed.

But when the first little streak of the wakening day fell on my uncurtained eyes, I arose and went to the window. Wonderful Nature! how blessed is thine influence on the heart that loves thee! One of the pleasantest effects of travel is, that the memory becomes a vast picture-book, or magic lantern with self-shifting slides.

Beautiful Trauensee! I do love thee exceedingly. That dark lake first met my sight when I watched the rising sun crown with glory the high summits of the snowy Alps, slant its beams down over dark forests and huge precipitous rocks, and send them stealing gently

over the soft, deep lake until they reached the shore, and the voice of day called up the sleeping cottagers from their neat white houses, which, fenced in with flowers and shrubs, and adorned with green windows and verandahs, formed the village that bears the name of Gmunden.

Arts and artists, history and its memorials, churches and their reliques, are very well for a time; but after that time, the heart, with ten-fold love, will cry, All hail! to the fair spirit which the genius of man has never touched.

We crossed the romantic lake of Gmunden, or Trauensee, in the steamboat conducted by a Scotch captain; it is hemmed in by the most precipitous walls of black, or greenish, rock, towered over in their turn by mountains of snow shining in the warm sun. The enormous Trauenstein casts its dark shadow on the water, and great, never-used-out forests stretch away far on the slopes of the opening banks.

Our Scotch captain told the gentlemen of our party, namely, Uncle Patrick and Nephew Albert, a popular version of the local story (a sort of Hero and Leander tale), which I had understood in a rather different manner. The picturesque ruins of the castle of Ort, on an island in the lake, he called a nunnery, and

he made the Hero and Leander a nun and a monk ; and to commemorate the miracle performed, I know not how, on behalf of the pair, the pulpit in the little chapel on one of the banks is formed, *on dit*, in the shape of a boat, supported by a *religieux* and a *religieuse*.

"The monk," said the Scot, who, I suspect, was a follower of John Knox, "used nightly to swim over the lake to behold his nun."

"But pray, Sir," said Uncle Patrick, with solemn inquisitiveness, "how did the gentleman carry his clothes?"

The Scotchman rubbed his whiskers, and looked as if the question had never been asked before. There was a little titter among us, and Albert O'Donnell wondered whether Lord Byron had made any discoveries as to the equipment of Leander.

Ischl is one of the most charming, aristocratic, exclusive, and expensive little watering-places in existence. Scarborough, before the railroads destroyed its exclusiveness, scarcely surpassed it in expense ; indeed, for Austria, it is much dearer than the other, for England, ever was.

It is wonderfully beautiful ; its salt-works are curious, and its situation in the interesting and splendid Salzkammergut, or, as that compound

German signifies, “ private property of the emperor in the vale of the Salza,”—all crushed into the word Salzkammergut,—affords facilities for those easy excursions which constitute one of the great pleasures of all watering-places. We were only to spend one day here *en route* to Saltzburg; for Evelyn had not lost her anxious desire for progress, and her face still seemed to say,

“ Still must I on, for I am as a weed
Fling from the rock, on ocean’s foam to sail ;
Where’er the surge may sweep, the tempest’s breath
prevail.”

But Uncle Patrick was greatly interested in the salt-works. He told us he had been examining a salt steam-bath, made by the vapour of the boiling brine.

“ Have you used one?” we asked.

“ Upon my word, ladies,” was his reply, “ I should be afraid of turning into Lot’s wife.”

From the window of our handsome new hotel, we observed a splendid carriage, drawn by four noble horses, and driven by a young man, with two grooms standing behind, and a third sitting beside him. Round and round, and round it went, much, I should think, to the vexation of the fine horses, who had no other burden to bear; and dozens of times did it pass

by us, while a pair of moustached lips were constantly raised to the window beneath us, to which some ladies duly repaired to admire the driver, who was amusing himself, or his grooms.

We made some remarks, and the Kellner, who was in the room, informed us it was an English equipage, and the driver was Lord something.

But at this time of day, to drive a four-in-hand round and round the narrow confines of this beautiful mountain village does not make people stare, any more than it does to see the same nobility sail a yacht to Norway, in order to bring home a salmon in triumph up the Thames.

Evening had drawn on when we entered the romantic pass of Lueg, on our road to Salzburg and Munich ; the day had been hot, and twilight brought refreshment without chilliness. Our road was a narrow pass between dark walls of rocks, through which the Salza forces its channel, roaring amid trees and masses of stone ; fire-flies, like fairy lights, flitted across our path ; the glow-worm shining on the banks, wherever a tree or blade of grass was seen, appeared to direct the course of the winged luminary.

It is singular how little was said among us that evening. I believe, whenever hearts feel

intensely, lips are inclined to silence. Uncle Patrick, his good wife, and Geraldine's travelling servant, were asleep in the second carriage ; we set weight against numbers, and thus divided the party on that occasion. Every one in ours was wide awake, but each heart had its own communings. Perhaps mine, and the Kutschers, if the truth were known, were the only loveless ones. But what know I of his ? and, as to the others, I am not yet come to the place of elucidation.

And forth came the smiling stars, lighting up the clear dark firmament ; and like then had they looked down on the romantic pass of Lueg, and ever will do so, though they light our way no more, nor preside over the destiny of any of us there again, as who knows but they may have done in those silent hours.

We got out to look down, by the clear starlight, into the Caldron, an awful spot, where the tortured steam appears to boil in agony ; and there, into that Caldron, is human labour sent ; for when the wood, precipitated down the steam from Styrian forests, gets entangled in the abyss, a woodcutter is lowered by ropes to cut it out with his hatchet.

All the world admits that Salzburg is one of the most beautifully situated cities of Germany, .

indeed, the most so. I had long wished to see it, but I believe there are accidents of the mental or physical being, which more or less tinge with light or shade, beauty or repulsiveness, every scene we visit. I never could think Cowes, for instance, a charming place, because I first saw it when suffering from a dreadful headache.

I had no headache at Saltzburg ; but I do not know how it is, that place is not among one of my mental *tableaux vivans*, ready to rise up when I call for it. Women can feel, but seldom can define. It is, after all, the

“ I don’t like you, Doctor Fell.”

We went off to Munich, and saw the king’s—the *ci-devant* king’s—chamber of beauties ; for his majesty has since resigned his crown, if not his collection. It was a sort of emblematised harem. The face which, in the general meaning of that disagreeable word, might be termed handsomest, was that of a shoemaker’s daughter of the town. But we thought it a pity she was not made to wear her beautiful national costume, especially the silvery swallow-tail that finishes the exquisite little coiffure of the *bourgeoise* of Munich, and of which King Ludvig, we are told, was a patron.

But in that city of modern art we heard of but one artiste; wherever we went, whatever we asked for, whoever we spoke of, Lola Montes was brought forward.

I was once at Avignon, at the time of an inundation caused by the conflux of the Rhone and Duranee; shut up at the top of a high house, on the top of the hill, I knew no more of what passed below me than kings and queens do of the state of their poor subjects. But still I heard the report of my ministers, and wherever any deficiency was to be accounted for, "the waters" bore the blame of it, or served as an excuse for the delinquencies of other people. If my fire was not kindled, it was because of "the waters;" if I wanted some one to tell me about the old palace of the exiled popes, and the dungeon of the liberal Rienzi, I heard they were "in the waters;" if my coffee was cold before I was told it was ready, the old woman grumbled forth "Les eaux."

So at Munich, substitute Lola Montes for "les eaux," and you know all I can tell you of that artistic capital.

We told Albert O'Donnell to go and engage a Lohnkutscher, to help us on to Innspruck, and he shook his dark curls, saying,

"Depend upon it, he will demand treble fare,

on the plea that Lola Montes will want his services."

But the Lohnkutscher actually left poor Lola to find a substitute when she wanted one, and set off with us on a delightful route to Tyrol, by Tagernsee and Achensee, places which every one should visit; and by the baths of Kreuth, where a Finnish countess, whom we had met *en route* from Stockholm, had come (dying, it would appear) all the way from the North Cape, to drink, as she told us in French, *le petit lait*; in German, *Molkenkur*; in English, milk-cure; that is, goat's whey mingled with the juice of herbs.

Passing Tagernsee and its fine Alpine scenery, we came on, through a wilder landscape still, to the pass of Achen, our road increasing in grandeur until it assumed an aspect of almost savage wildness. The beautiful lake to which it gives its name is much more impressive than Tagernsee.

But when we had got to the great dark pass of Achen, night was closing in; and just at this place, which is peopled only by charcoal-burners, the Lohnkutscher of Munich, who probably knew his own haunts, had arranged to stop for the night, and arranged also that one of the horses of our carriage should drop a shoe.

We had left the carriages, and were standing in the passage of the dark-looking inn, where Geraldine affirmed it was impossible for us to stop, but the *Münicher* found it equally impossible to go on; and she was informed that a little further on an English carriage had been upset through the same obstinacy, and an English gentleman had had his leg broken, and, for the *gnüdig Fräulein*, that was a catastrophe that must be avoided. On hearing a translation of this, Aunt Patrick decided on remaining where she was; but fearing the issue of the contest in unknown tongues, she drew her nephew aside, and standing on tiptoe so as to get her fingers on his shoulders, she said, “Berty, dear, when I came to travel with you, and to take care of you, I placed my life in your hands. Now, my dear boy, I call upon you to remember that.”

“ Well, dear aunt, if they attempt to take it in the house, we shall have a struggle for it; but if we are upset in the dark, I fear it will be an equal chance.”

“ You are right, Berty; so, for your own sake, dear, as well as mine and your uncle’s, don’t let us go driving about through the wild rocks, to have our limbs broken, like Don Quixote and poor Mrs. McCarthy of Limerick.”

This speech decided the matter. Poor Uncle Patrick too was tired, and complained that he had travelled longer in the world than any of us. So we followed our guide, with a long thin candle in her hand, to a very long, but really clean upper room, which we understood was to serve as our *salle à manger*, but which, though to be used as a dining-room, contained no fewer than nine narrow beds.

What we could get to eat here was dubious, but Geraldine had a whole tea equipage in the carriage; it was put in requisition, and with the help of a jugful of boiled milk, some strange sort of bread, a whole dishful of eggs, and a great quantity of good humour, we made a very comfortable extemporaneous repast.

Seldom, perhaps, has such a sense of enjoyment been derived from a luxurious hotel and its exquisite attendants.

I had never seen poor Albert O'Donnell quite in his element until this evening; the melancholy that, even amid his mirth, appeared to prey on his mind, gave place now to real gaiety of heart.

His mirth had often appeared to me to sport with his misery: he once showed Evelyn and me a poem he had made, descriptive of an ancient festive scene, where every one

twined his goblet with the plant most indicative of his history, or feelings ; but one youth twined his with thorns, and drained the wine-cup through them. Evelyn's gentle heart was full of pity and of wonder. She could have taken the thorns alone, or the wine-cup alone ; but to drain the one through the other was to her the ultimatum of wretchedness.

But now O'Donnell forgot the thorns, or touched them not in drinking. The concomitant circumstances produced a different effect from that which scenes of ease and luxury, taste and expenditure, generally had upon a too delicately-toned mind ; formed to enjoy all, but by the accidents of fortune unentitled to any.

His wit and playful humour rendered a bare birchen table, and a curious sort of saloon, as agreeable as the "marble halls of kings" are perhaps usually found to be. But as we wished, at our Municher's rather imperative request, to start at daylight in the morning, we requested the wild-looking Kellnerin, who was our attendant, to show us to our several apartments. Her dialect no one could make out, and Evelyn, as being more versed in this sort of speech, undertook to descend to the kitchen and parley with our hostess.

After she had gone, I began to think I might

have accompanied her, and on my motion Geraldine, and finally Albert, came with me.

At the door of the kitchen we were held back, for he placed a hand on each of our shoulders. I saw Geraldine shrink as if a burning iron had pressed hers; but for my part I felt only an intimation to stop and regard the scene before us. Slipping from beneath the restraining hand, she drew back, and I found her at my other side. But Rembrandt or Salvator Rosa would, I think, have done what Albert O'Donnell did. A sketch of the scene before us might have been worth preserving.

The kitchen was nearly dark, for the long, thin resin candle served rather as a signal than a light, gleaming obscurely in the thick smoke that enveloped it. At each side of the narrow tables sat the blackened charcoal-burners, puffing forth great blasts of smoke in each other's smoke-begrimed faces. At the further extremity glared the red coppery light of the unblazing furnace, on which was fizzing the supper they were to enjoy, and of which the great beer-cans, that divided the space between the opposite ranks, were only the preliminary. Before the red furnace, whose light was reflected on her face, stood our hostess

with a long ladle in her hand ; the fire, the glare, the gloom, the dark faces, and feeble light, would alone have rendered it a scene for either of the painters I have selected ; but in the centre of it Evelyn had just alighted with her noiseless step, her usual white robe, her gleaming hair, and pure angelic face.

The black men looked round, and held the smoke suspended in their open mouths ; the hostess turned her glowing face from the furnace, and hastily made the sign of the cross. In the background we lingered ; but some sensations, perhaps not far remote from the source of those which made our hostess cross herself, prevented us from smiling at the scene.

It is a pity that I have not now something more romantic to relate : alas ! it appears a very common-place sequel to this brigand-like scene, to add, that the angel-visitant who had caused the charcoal-burners to suspend their smoke, and the Bavarian cook to bless herself, had only descended for the purpose of arranging the sleeping accommodation of some tired mortals.

Guess the answer : but tell it not in the streets of our modern Askelon ! There was none, but what the one great room, which we used as a *salle à manger*, afforded.

You may think what hearty laughter it at first called forth ; then what indignation ; finally what supplications, representations, and arguments. One was just as efficacious as the other.

No smile nor frown, no assent or dissent, disturbed the immoveable, although furnace-reflecting countenance. It was the only room there was—*voilà tout*.

There were only six persons, and there were nine beds, and she did not think it probable any other travellers would arrive that night.

“ But if they do so, you will put them into the same room ? ”

“ Why, yes,” with the same grave stoicism, she replied ; “ that, indeed, must be.”

“ But if we pay for all the beds ? ”

“ Oh ! that makes another case ; then they are yours. But six people will not want nine beds.”

“ If we can have no others,” said Albert to his uncle, after having carried on this colloquy, “ you and I can carry out a couple of them, and build them up elsewhere.”

Uncle Patrick laughed his hearty laugh, and readily assented ; while poor aunt sat with her feet firmly set on the floor, as if fearing even it would run away with her in this strange

land—for alas ! customs too common among our own poor peasantry strike us as something horrible in foreign lands—her head swaying from side to side, and her eyes upturned, as she breathed her soul into the words, “Oh ! Patrick ! Patrick ! they talk of Ireland, but what is it ?”— .

However, just as the beds were taking down, and about to be carried away in the arms of Uncle Patrick and Nephew Albert, in came our sedate hostess, and laying restricting hands on the operation, said, that if our inclination was to pay for nine beds when we only wanted six, there were two others also which we could have in a distant part of the house, and the Herren might take them also.

The offer was accepted, and gravely nodding her head, she said, “Ja ; das ist besser :” and so the debate closed.

CHAPTER II.

ZILLERTHAL IN TYROL.

I DATE from Zillerthal, for I am on its threshold ; it is stretched before me ; but, veritably speaking, I am laid on a very remarkable sort of couch in the great stone house which stands on the road-side exactly at the mouth, as they say, of that lovely vale. We drew up to its door, either to rest the horses, or to get one of those unique vehicles, called Eil-spaunn, to rattle us over the rough road of that most charming of valleys ; but, unhappily, an old adage, far too vulgar to quote, it was here my lot to verify.

Out from the rustic inn ran a noble specimen of the Tyrolese, our worthy host, that was to be, for longer than we wished or intended ; his peaked hat in hand, his round dark jacket, velveteens, bright blue stockings, and embroidered belt, all displaying his fine, firmly-built figure.

Now being, I suppose, the prima-donna, in point of long standing in the world, I became the object of multiplied attentions ; for the Tyrolean, Uncle Patrick, and Mr. O'Donnell, all assisted, conjointly, in getting my person out of the carriage ; the result of which assistance was, that I reached the ground so as to sprain an ankle.

If it were not profane, I should call this house a Pisgah, from which I could see the land, I am not yet to enter, for I wanted to visit the Zillerthal ; and, instead of doing so, here is the *gnädig Frau*, overwhelmed with kindness, attention, and pain.

To divert the latter, I may sketch the things around me. First in this rude house, I recline on a bed instead of a sofa, the linen of which, both fine and white, as well as the immense pillows, are trimmed with a broad sort of lace made of thick thread ; the window curtains are of coloured muslin, tastefully arranged ; the floor is not quite clean, and the plain walnut furniture about as good as may be seen in an English labourer's cottage. There is no appearance of any means of making a toilet, but I know that, when called for, something like a small pie-dish will be brought, with an economical portion of water, and a towel, still of scantier

proportions, all of which will disappear when used.

Then, as to looking-glasses, how is it that the Tyrolese manage to make themselves so smart, if all their mirrors are arranged like that in this room, where I have seen poor Evelyn, who very seldom displays such zeal, actually stand on a table, and then mount a chest of drawers, in order to see her own face? The glass was hung on the wall, so that the upper end touched the ceiling: if it had been on the ceiling, it might have reflected the objects below.

But these walls are hung round with an entire genealogical portraiture of the reigning house of Austria; and our host, who stands hat-in-hand beside me, deplored the fate of the *gndig Frau*, regards their royal faces with just the same grave and tender devotion which he bestows on the saints and Madonnas that throng the waysides of his delightful country.

If *der Kaiser* should want a place of refuge, surely he will find one in Tyrol.* That country has not been subjugated to his rule by right of conquest, neither made over to it by what is termed the right of treaty; it passed legi-

* The writer did not think this prediction would be so soon verified.

timately to the house of Hapsburgh, and their loyalty is consequently as legitimate as it is fervent. The organ of veneration must be prominent on Tyrolean heads. Their superstition—call it devotion, if you will—and their loyalty appear to have the same origin. Yet the very step of the Tyroler, his air and carriage, announce the lover of freedom and independence: dwellers in the mountains usually are so. The plains are for the rulers of others, in the mountains all is free; the wing of the bird, and the rush of the torrent, the spring of the chamois, and the course of the wind, are free, and the mountaineer is free among them. In the wild domain of Nature, he calls no man lord.

But such a love of freedom does not tend to sever them from the endurance of spiritual restraints. Infidelity is rarely met with among mountaineers: the people of the Pyrenees do not share in the Deism of France. Here the people may, in all things, be too superstitious, but are really devout. The former is almost a natural result of their position. The voice of God speaks to the mountain wanderers in the lightning's flash and thunder's roar: in the terrible greatness of the things around him, God is all, man is nothing. The avalanche

over his path, the precipice beneath it, the resistless torrent that tears up the sturdy pine before his eyes, all have power over him, and he has none against them ; his preservation is a daily miracle ; the cross, that pious charity erects to guide him, becomes a natural means of safety, but he sees a miracle performed through it : his religion assumes the form of a devout veneration for, and belief in, all spiritual existences ; and to saints and angels, to crosses and images, he ascribes every deliverance, and commits himself in all time of danger. The wonderful defence of the Tyrol in the time of the gallant Hofer was animated by an abhorrence of French infidelity ; even when terrified Austria forsook the loyalists of Tyrol, the patriots still fought for their religion and their land against France and Bavaria.

While thus ruminating, my room was growing darker and darker, and then it began to grow lighter and lighter ; for, on, stealing up behind the snowy mountain, crept the silver moon, shedding its pale radiancy on the summit ; and, on, walking in brightness, she advanced to her lonely throne, where neither cloud nor star disputed her empire.

And what were those ghost-like figures, robed in white, that appeared only then to come

forth and range themselves all along that high mountain ? I thought there was a procession of penitents ascending to the chapel and hermitage which are built on its top. But it was what in Germany is called a Calvarienberg, in France bears the more touching title of "The Way of the Cross"—the way Christ trod to Calvary. Oh ! how miserably poor and vain the best art of men to depict that way !

In general there is something in these rude efforts too low, mean, even grotesque, to excite the sentiments they are intended to produce. Yet now, seen in the distance, in moonlight; and on that snowy mountain, this long range of white statues, tracing out the path up its side to the chapel on the summit, had a most singular and mystical effect. • What pains do the clergy of Rome take to inspire and maintain religious feeling among their people ! The clergy of England are anxious either to implant religious doctrine, or to produce moral conduct.

Here no mountain is without its chapel, no spot of danger or deliverance uncommemorated by a cross. The waymarks in the mountains are all remembrancers of faith.

Revolting though the crucifixes, depicting a suffering Saviour, are, the simple cross is a

touching and useful sign-post to the benighted mountaineer.

But while doomed to retirement in the stone house at Strass, I am not left to solitude; Evelyn scarcely leaves me; good Aunt Patrick is at home again when she can make herself useful, and assist my Kellnerin, who, with her peaked hat always on head, her dark boddice without sleeves, and the linen ones of the under garment trimmed with the same thick lace that flounces the sheets, is busy in applying fomentations of hot vinegar to my disabled ankle. Aunt Patrick is at home in this ugly stone house: the people are so friendly, and hearty, and happy, that the dear woman believes she quite understands all that their faces say, and is confident they understand her. Uncle Pat looks in and pities me five or six times a day; and then delights in a stroll down the road, where there is no danger of losing himself, where all the people he meets bow to him, and, if it be before dinner, wish him a good appetite, and if after dinner, a good digestion; his nephew has explained the form of salutation, and Uncle Pat will doubtless use it on his return to the banks of the Shannon. Geraldine, when no one else is with me, comes to charm away the pain of a sprained ankle by

intellectual discourse. But one of my most frequent and constant visitors is poor O'Donnell. He looks so ill himself; his eyes are so darkly bright, they quite pain me. He is changed of late: his mirth, if not feigned, is evidently an exertion for the sake of others. That self-renunciation, which can even put away grief from the belief that it is unshared by others, or oppressive to them, is no uncommon trait of an Irish character; it is not the least akin to what is termed French levity, yet often considered to be so. An unexplained sympathy appears to me to have attracted Evelyn and Albert to each other; she, who so easily discerned and determinately shunned the young baron's passion, never seems fearful of inspiring the ardent, too sensitive young Irishman with one as hopeless. I did not know that she had intuitively discovered, as she had done in Lilla's case, that Albert O'Donnell was already a hopeless, but a devoted, almost an infatuated lover.

From that evening which we spent at the pass of Achen, we had observed his melancholy to increase; and the dejection he struggled against, with an effort that was painful to witness, had insensibly produced some change in us all. Geraldine herself, usually so noble, so calm, so

seldom affected by suppositions, appeared frequently disturbed or anxious; she used to be so sisterly, or even motherly, with him ; their conversation was so animated, so diversified, flitting from topic to topic, and glancing, like the fire-flies, through dark leaves and odorous flowers ; but now Geraldine was silent or constrained. She had taken her seat with Aunt Patrick in the travelling carriage, and she never joined the little assemblies which were held in the curious boudoir of the *gnädig Frau*.

For my part I was tired of being a *gnädig Frau*, and perhaps it was to relieve my impatience that, in a moment of confidence, poor Albert intrusted to me some little sketches of his own sad life, telling me what I was to do with the paper in case of his death. . .

Evelyn and I read it together, and there can be no harm in inserting it here.

CHAPTER III.

THE STONE HOUSE AT STRASS.

“THE first time I can recollect a clear consciousness of existence,” said Albert O’Donnell’s description of some passages in his life of twenty-four years’ date, “I was dancing to my shadow, which fell against the bank of a grassy hollow on a common in Ireland. Behind me, at a short distance, was the cabin where I was placed ~~out~~ ‘to nurse,’ as they say there, and where I was left until I was five years old, without knowing other relatives than daddy and mammy; that is to say, the good old couple who inhabited the cabin aforesaid. I was dancing to my shadow, and it danced to me; I stretched my arms to it, and it stretched its arms to me. I was then more than four years old, and should have had sense enough to be satisfied with its responses. But I ran to catch it, to embrace it, to make it my own; then it shot up tall, and sank down low, and滑ed

away just as I thought I had grasped it, and my hands caught hold of the cold bank. I was angry, and ready to tear it in pieces, because it mocked my expectations, for the barefooted lonely urchin never discovered in the dancing shadow the type of his future ; never understood that thus fortune, and love, and hope, were to respond to his advances at a distance, and to evade his approach ; to allure and mock his throbbing heart, and glide away into nothingness when he fancied the moment of possession was come. One more of the unforget-ten epochs of a childish existence, is that of a day when my nurse had assured me I was a very good boy ; and as she also told me a story of a good man who could walk on water, I saw no reason why a good boy should not do so as well. I went to make the experiment on a pond, but seeing the leaf of a lily floating on the surface, I prudently put my foot on it before trusting to the bare water. The lily-leaf gave way, just as all my after-dependencies did, —I was nearly drowned ; and it is only later years that tell me the shadow and the leaf have their types and morals.

“ I was just five years old when my nurse, one fine May morning, came out on my favourite common, crying, took my hand, and led me

into the house ; she led me up to a small, strange-visaged man, with long black hair, a high, narrow forehead, and large dark eyes, and said,

“ ‘ Go to your father, Berty.’

“ I drew my face behind her.

“ ‘ I wo’nt have a father ; I don’t want a father,’ cried the whining child.

“ She whispered to me about a father and a mother, but I replied,

“ ‘ I will stay with mammy and daddy.’

“ My decision was of no avail ; I was transported from the breezy common to one of the narrowest, dirtiest of the streets of Dublin. It had been a great street once ; the house was built in the old times, when Dublin had an aristocracy ; it was a large, dilapidated, wainscoted house, with deep windows, the glass of which needed no blind, for the light never fully penetrated through the dust and dirt of years, and no eyes could decipher the domestic mysteries that were enacted within.

“ Its aspect, young as I was, cast a gloom over my spirit. My father held my hand as we stood on the bare, uneven boards of the hall, and mounted the wide, bare wooden stairs. Other persons crowded round us, and talked all together, and cried out their various opinions :

‘ How tall he is !’—‘ What a queer-looking thing !’—‘ What great glaring eyes !’—‘ What curly hair !’ and a pretty lady, whom they told me I was to call mamma, as I never more must say mammy, put her hand on my head, and pushed it back to look in my face, and said,

“ ‘ He looks as wild as a mere cabin child.’

“ Such was my arrival ‘ at home.’

“ My birth had made me one *de trop* in my family. There was a long space between me and ‘ the next youngest,’ and I had come into life *mal à propos*.

“ My father was one of the numerous Irishmen who are delicately said to be ‘ unable to manage their affairs :’ but besides this general disability, he was one of those who think they do enough for their children by conferring on them the blessing of existence, and leave them subsequently to make what use of it they please ; teaching them, however, the fifth commandment, if they teach them nothing else, and responding to it themselves with peculiar emphasis.

“ I had brothers many years older ; great, rough, uneducated lads. I shrank from them like so many bull-dogs. Poor mammy and daddy had had no children ; and to listen to her fairy tales, legends, and ghost stories, and

to ramble at will over the breezy common, had constituted the even tenor of my way for five blissful years. My nature was not akin to my brothers'; I became the object of their rude sport; they worried me as they would a stray cat. Whenever I came in view, the halloo was raised, and chase given.

" My place of retreat was beneath the half-circular table which filled then, and may fill still, the space between the two misty windows of what was denominated 'the drawing-room;' it was covered with a long, green, faded cloth; over it was a dingy pier-glass, and under it, on an old footstool, was my hiding-place.

" There have I sat whole hours; my little figure huddled together, my arms crossed on my knees, my head nearly touching them; and there have I slept that mental sleep, on which, in the wide-awake hours of after-life, we look back, and wonder at its dimly remembered dreams.

" One day when I was at large, I saw a man, who had come about some business to my father, drawing a design for a building in his pocket-book. My father had left the room, and the man, looking at my wondering eyes, asked me if I should like to be an architect?

" Oh yes! was my reply, if he would only

give me the thing he did it with. He laughed, and gave me a large black-lead pencil.

“ That day certainly gave a character to my life. I was then six years old ; the pencil became a dear and only companion. With it, in the little studio under the green table-cover, the artist life began. The near-sightedness which I always retained was contracted there. My scraps of drawing were discovered ; every one was amused at them, no one ever praised me for them ; but the only boon I ever obtained was of sheets of paper and pencils.

“ Now, with my new pursuit, even my manly brothers, as they were called, failed to render my poor existence so utterly miserable. How horrible, and generally how hardening, is a joyless childhood ! What a cat usually is in other houses, I was made in my home : whatever happened, the blame rested on me. My mother generally lay on the sofa reading novels or poetry : all that I remember of her is, that when the culprit was brought before her, she used to take off a chamois leather slipper and beat me with it. She died when I was seven years old.

“ Soon after her death my father came one day into the ‘ drawing-room,’ lifted up the old table-cover, and pulled me out of my studio. A

large country-looking man, dressed as a Quaker, was with him.

“ ‘This is the boy,’ he said ; ‘ if you wish to settle the business in that way, you may have him.’

“ ‘Very well,’ was the reply ; ‘ but let there be no mistake between us. If I take charge of the boy, and find him in board and lodging, food, clothing, and moral instruction, thou, on thy part, dost agree to let me hear no more of the portion of my late sister’s fortune which thou thinkest has not been paid ?’

“ ‘Just so,’ said my father, and adding, smiling at his brother-in-law, ‘ as to the moral instruction, friend, I suppose I may leave that to be regulated by thy conscience ? The boy has not learned his letters yet, but he is fond of drawing.’

“ ‘Drawing !’ exclaimed the Quaker, making a rather ominous face at me.

“ My father laughed, and, as he said, ‘ for the fun of the thing,’ he put a quantity of pencils and paper into my box ; the only remembrance I had of my home during five dreary years consisted of the same valuable present.

“ My maternal uncle took me to the remote country-house where he lived. He had one

child, a daughter, about twelve years older than myself; she was as cruel to me as any one else had been, and I hated her.

"Her parents, of course, idolized her: they said she was to instruct me, and that I was a fortunate child to be so instructed. But Martha, according to her notion of things, was a decidedly religious character: she had burst the bands of Quakerism, and was consequently free from that strict obligation to the performance of moral duty which might have been ~~an~~ advantage to me. Her outdoor charities were numerous: in collecting for societies, attending meetings, visiting schools, and sundry other matters, her valuable time was too well employed to be thrown away upon me. I stayed in the house from morning to evening, and never conversed with any one but the cook.

"My uncle and aunt meant to be very careful of me. Their system was quite a negative one; it consisted in shutting me up from all risk of harm; in keeping me from all access to the tree of knowledge. I was never allowed to go out alone, for fear I should talk to the labourers, or stimulate spirits which even in my dungeon life appeared at times capable of excitation; the wild joyousness of my first years, spent on the Irish common, lent them a

blessed impetus which carried me through many a dark and dreary day.

“ I sat at the table with my protectors, and ate my dinner at five o’clock every day ; and then I was sent to bed, because the conversation of grown-up persons was not suited to children. But the sun went down just before my little crib, and I have got up and crept into the window-seat, and drawing my nightgown over my feet, I have sat huddled up there, watching the red sky, and framing stories from the grotesque forms of the evening clouds. And when the moon got up, I have been there too, and certainly, uncle and aunt, and cousin Martha, would have thought me possessed of an evil spirit if they had had any idea of the vagaries of my fancy. How precious to me at these times was the rich stock of legendary lore with which my good nurse had so early crammed my memory.

“ Nearly five years of such dreary bondage were added to my joyless life : I was almost twelve years old, and did not know the letters of the alphabet : how I longed for that mystic key which might admit me into the treasures of knowledge and wonders I heard spoken of ! I once coaxed cousin Martha to begin the task ; but she said I was stupid, and that four-year-

old babies at the Infant School understood the elements of mathematics and optics, and an awful list of things which I had never heard of.

“ My deliverance, however, was at hand. One day, when the sun shone and the wind blew, my spirit burst its trammels ; I took my seldom-used cap, and in the absence of the cook, ran out into the shrubbery. A rabbit started up, and with it started up my long-congealed blood ; I tore my cap from my head, flung it after the creature, and scampered away, shouting, hallooing, running, as if mad. How long the chase lasted, or where it led me, I knew not.

“ I was far away from my prison-house, and fell, from sheer exhaustion, on the side of a hillock ; my long-crippled limbs could carry me no further. But how delicious was that sense of fatigue, that most enrapturing flow of liberated spirits. From the mere intensity of enjoyment, I fell asleep.

“ The sun I used to look at from my chamber window was setting, when I was awoke by a labourer’s view halloo. He had espied me lying there, and was waving his hat to my captors ; uncle, aunt, cousin, and cook, were all following, looking into the ditches, poking under every bush and bramble. When they came up, with exclamations of wonder, and questioned me as

to the cause of such outrageous conduct, I laid all the blame on the rabbit. Cousin Martha raised up her hands and said I was a very bad boy indeed; my uncle and aunt looked very solemn, and predicted that a lad capable of such wild excitement from a rabbit-chase, only wanted free scope and opportunity to plunge into all the excitement of the world.

“Perhaps, they were right; but my cap was lost, and that present loss weighed more heavily on me just then than any future one their sagacity might foresee as the result of my excitable temperament.

“I do not know whether this rabbit-race had an influence on my future course; but very soon afterwards my father arrived at my prison, and took me back to Dublin.

“The next day he took my hand without saying a word, led me out in silence, and brought me to a large old house in the suburbs, where I found myself at school. A new era in my life had begun.

“At twelve years old I did not know the alphabet; at seventeen I had read Ariosto in his own tongue. Not that my knowledge of Italian led me to know Ariosto, my knowledge of Ariosto led me to learn Italian. The same was the case with the German and French authors; I formed a distant acquaint-

ance through intermediate friends, and then I could not rest satisfied without that personal intimacy which the acquirement of their language alone could afford me.

" My brothers were then what is termed gay young men : they were willing to bribe me to sit up at night to let them in ; but all the bribe required was the liberty to keep a light burning.

" An artist life was now my aim ; but how was I to effect it ? My father talked, proposed, decided, and did nothing. Like other Irish youths, I was allowed to grow up without any profession or business. I was twenty-three, and yet there appeared no avenue by which a spirit pining for action could get forth and begin its career.

" A little literary hope had just then been excited in Dublin. Like all hopes for Ireland, it was false ; a delusive glare, and that of a poor *ignis fatuus* character. It was the epoch of illustrations. Genius had retired from our earth, and burlesque and pantomime supplied the place she had vacated.

" My style was not caricature ; I tried it, but the grave would still slip in, the serious dash the comic with melancholy. My caricatures were quite Irish—a mournful comedy.

" A kind friend, who was doing what he could to drag the poor genius of Ireland through

her native bogs, brought me one day an open note, which had been sent to him by an English lady who had come from the south of Ireland, and now wanted to get an artist to accompany her into the county of Wicklow for the purpose of sketching some old place in which she had an interest.

“ By a natural concatenation of circumstances, this lady had got acquainted in Limerick with an uncle and aunt of mine, who were quite unknown to me. Law, which is, *par excellence*, the profession of a lawless country, had early separated my uncle from my father ; the former had married a good, plain, honest-hearted Irish girl, who had brought him a small income, and they had spent their lives in perfect peace on the banks of the Shannon.

“ Nevertheless, this good aunt had some idea (how derived I know not) that she had a nephew who was a genius, and I suppose she thought she was doing a good action when she got this lady to promise me her patronage. The gentleman I allude to was consequently requested to find me out, employ me, and appoint ‘ the person’ to be at such a place on such a day, in order to attend the parties to the county of Wicklow.

“ I certainly did regard this event as the

most important of my life, although I little imagined what it was to lead to.

“ I had often heard of the literary ladies who resort to the library of the British Museum ; I fancied one of these having come to our strange land to make some learned researches, making, at the same time, my way plain before me by introducing me at once to the great world of London.

“ An elderly lady in blue spectacles and blue stockings, was thus to me a most attractive object. My heart palpitated as I approached the appointed spot. A sweet, modest cottage, in a garden, overlooking the sea, was the abode, *pro tempore*, of my Egeria. The porch and windows were embowered in the blossoms of honeysuckle, which shed, even afar, a sweet odour on the air.

“ An old man was at work in the garden, and as the door lay open, and no one appeared, he told me to enter. The little parlour door was also open, and no answer coming to my tap, I went into it. There was some work, a sketch, and the ‘ Faëry Queen,’ lying on the table, as if each and all had been in actual use ; but no one was there at that moment to use them. I suppose every one on a first visit begins, when thus left time to speculate, to form some

idea of the genius of the bower to which he has been ushered. I heard voices not far off; a loud Irish, and low-toned English one.

“ ‘ Well, Kitty,’ said the latter, as it moved nearer to me, ‘ I do really think that the potato is the bane of Ireland.’

“ ‘ *Musha* then, Heaven help her,’ said old Kitty, thinking that the sweet voice had gone further than hers could reach, ‘ much would the likes of her know about ordering a dinner, or anything else, when she can’t tell a potayty from a bean.’

“ The last word, of course, was pronounced ‘ bane :’ it produced a slight laugh in the passage, and almost at the same moment a painter’s model of grace, and a poet’s ideal of loveliness, stood before me.

“ I had at first sight not the remotest idea that this was the blue lady I had come to see. She looked at me with something like astonishment; and then a blush rose up suddenly over neck, and face, and brow, until her deep—I know not what coloured—eyes grew black as night with the suffusion.

“ I guessed the whole truth. She was as wrong in her calculation as I had been. I felt there was neither blue stockings nor blue spectacles in the case; and I was convinced she had

expected to see a mere painter, with dirty hands and a bearded chin. We stood revealed, face to face, the real instead of the ideal ; and we both burst out laughing. We did not, however, explain why, and each thought the other laughed at something else. The mistake of old Kitty formed a good means of escape, and we entered at once into a laughing conversation on Irish bulls and English blunders, until formality was fairly knocked on the head, and I believe the young lady really did forget that I was not an elderly painter in green spectacles, while I felt very doubtful whether she did not wear the blue. And so we laughed at Kitty's imagining the young Englishwoman did not know the difference between a potato and a bean, because she had said the potato was the bane of Ireland ; and I did not know whether her eyes were veiled in spectacles or not.

“ Who could look at such eyes and tell what they were ? The longer they were looked at, the more there was to see. And yet by the power of a strong mental command, an inward reserve, which conquered their expressiveness, they placed a silent veto on the rashness that would too hastily penetrate the mysteries of the mind they partially revealed.

“ She spoke of my uncle and aunt Patrick,

my unknown relations; and acting on the hint she had received from them, I made it so palpable that it was most desirable for me to make my *début* in artist life on such an occasion as this, that I believe she had not the heart to raise an objection, if she felt one.

“ But as to the manner of getting into Wicklow, she said she had not decided; thinking ‘the person’ Mr. —— sent would make that arrangement for her, for she had brought no carriage with her.

“ The last words had no significance to me; I knew that in my dear country no decent people would own to not keeping a carriage; the lady, it is true, was unmistakable in her air and manner, yet withal there was such a total absence of pretension or assumption, that, ignorant as I was, it never entered my brain to conceive that she was—not absolutely working for a livelihood, that, in the judgment of an Irishman, would be too disgraceful—but in fact not trying to make money by means of her present expedition in a most laudable manner. To assist her object was very agreeable to me; I felt at once transformed into the patron; and so, when the question of conveyance was raised, I proposed our national vehicle, the outside car, as the most delightful and cheapest.

"The lady smiled her bright peculiar smile; and, after a moment's reflection, asked if there were not danger of falling off?

"This of course produced a laugh, and she then assured me it was not on her own account she was apprehensive, but that her companion, an elderly woman, was very timid. I engaged to take care of her.

"She bowed, thanked me, and agreed that I should sit beside the elderly lady and take care of her.

"Well, we mounted on that Irish car; consigned though I was to the opposite side, I made that excursion with—what shall I call her?—Beatrice, the name of the Italian's love, will do; we made that little excursion, and it was not the last, hah!" This word was often uttered in a peculiar manner by our artist; it was as if a spasm crossed his heart; even in reading it here one could fancy the look, the tone, the pang of remembrance it produced and reflected on his most uncommon and interesting countenance.

"That little humble cottage in the garden became to me, trite as the saying is, the oasis in the drear desert of my life. It was the paradise of my young day-dreams.

"Do you recollect in an edition of Milton,

with Westall's designs, there is one representing Adam and the Angel discoursing in Eden, while Eve, in the back-ground, sits in modest grace retired, her hand resting on his shoulder? She is meant to be in the back-ground, but you feel hers is the prominent figure in the group. Just so have I thought when I saw in that simple cottage the sweet womanly graces which make Milton's Eve the ever-prominent, while half-hidden charm of paradise. Beatrice, I believe, fancied she was learning, while she taught me. Her exquisite conceptions of the beautiful and true filled my whole being with new light and life; but what charmed me perhaps more than all, because it was more rare, more unknown to me, and to the general genius of my land, was the clear, sound sense, that gave, as it were, solidity to the brilliancy of her intellect; the strong judgment that tempered her extreme sensibility, and the firm command she maintained over both the imagination and feeling, which we too often allow to run riot and lead to misery.

"Her manner naturally was playful and familiar; perhaps she was not aware of the false hopes it was calculated to inspire in an ardent, susceptible heart; a heart that had pined for love, and dwelt in solitude: the hard,

cold desolation of my previous destiny made the cup of joy and happiness too intoxicating. Oh ! if I had possessed a particle of her sound wisdom, of her calm discretion ; if that blessed time had not been cut short by my own rashness, she would have been the statuary who might have moulded the unformed clay of my intellectual nature into comeliness, if not beauty ! If I had not so soon, so hastily disturbed that blissful present ; in madness dashed from my hand the only cup of peace and enjoyment it had ever held ! But the dancing shadow and the leaf of the water-lily were types in my destiny.

* * * *

“ It was evening, delicious evening ; the broad bright moon shed a line of glory along the placid sea. The tide was full ~~in~~ ; we sat in each corner of the deep, old-fashioned window-seat, enjoying the cooled air, and watching that line as it spread wider and wider, and further and further, until it seemed to touch the opposite horizon.

“ ‘ In the depth of the night,’ said Beatrice, ‘ I have often risen to look at the light of Vesuvius reflected in the Bay of Naples ; but how much more lovely is this ? The scenery, if less beautiful in one aspect, is more so in

another. And then the coppery light of Vesuvius resembles the works of men; that golden bridge has nothing of this earth about it.'

"The 'golden bridge' brought to my excited brain some visionary ideas such as will, in such moonlit hours, fill that of a young enthusiastic poet. I began talking some nonsense, I know not what it was, of some earthly heaven, of treading that golden bridge, and reaching it with the beloved—of my dream of blessedness being attained. Beatrice seemed to be listening; her head leaning back against the window-frame, the moonlight softly irradiating her calm and intellectual face. I was intoxicated with other feelings than those which filled her mind; and while I was gazing on her eyes, and thinking they were too soft to be black, too dark to be blue, she broke her own silence, and cut short the wild dream of my soul, by commencing a conversation I was quite unprepared for, and which I will only give you an idea of by that which Lord Leveson Gower has put into English from Göthe:—

"MARGARET.—Now tell me, Henry—

"FAUST.—What I can."

"MARG.—How to religion is your soul inclined?

You are, indeed, a good, kind-hearted man:

My doubts on this one point distress my mind.

“ FAUST.—Dearest, no more of this ! You know me true ;
Know I would shed my heart’s best blood for you.
None of their faith or ritual would bereave.

“ MARG.—Too little this ; you should yourself believe.

“ FAUST.—Should I ?

“ MARG.—You never seek to share
Confession ; mass, ’tis long since thou wast there.
Dost thou believe ?

“ FAUST.—Ah ! dearest ! who can dare
Say he believes ?
Ask the religious, ask the wise,
And all the priest or sage replies
But mocks the asker.

“ MARG.—Faith, then, you have none.

“ FAUST.—Do not distort my answer, lovely one.
Who could himself compel
To say he disbelieves
The Being whose presence all must feel so well ?
The All-Creator,
The All-Sustainer,
Does he not uphold
Thyself, and me, and all ?
Does not the vaulted heaven expand
Round the fast earth on which we stand ?
Do we not hail it, though from far,
The light of each eternal star ?
Are not my eyes in yours reflected ?
And, all these living proofs collected,
Do they not flash upon the brain,
Do they not press upon the heart,
The proofs of Nature’s mystic reign ?
Inhale the feeling, till it fill
The breast, then call it what you will.

Call it an influence from above,
Faith, heaven, or happiness, or love ;
I have no name by which to call
The secret power, 'tis feeling all.

" MARG.—Still I hold out ;
'Tis of your Christianity I doubt.

" And thus did we reason of these sacred things, on which I had, I believe, deep feelings, but no settled opinions. I had early been disgusted with the religion I saw practised around me : not with the religion that was professed, I now know and believe that it held the elements of all faith ; that it was in itself holy, just, and true ; but I had myself no belief, I looked only at the *actings*, if I may say so, and not at the abstract truths of that religion. And in these I saw what appeared to me a strange confusion of principles ; a nearly total overlooking of the divine precepts, which require human lives, more or less, according to the talents given to them, to shadow forth the virtues of faith, hope, and charity.

" I never saw domestic religion ; there was the real cause of my scepticism ; I could not believe in the reality of that which I saw practised everywhere but at home. Young, uninstructed, and disposed to reflection, my mind had no sympathy with the religious excitement which

then prevailed around me. That time of religious effervescence has greatly passed away. I then saw religion made chiefly to consist in the substitution of one strange set of amusements for another. A popular preacher, or speaker, was the attraction which a celebrated performer, in more worldly cases, would have been. Almost the same scenes which the gallery of the Opera might present were to be seen at the crowded church where my family attended ; the same crushing, pushing, and anxiety, and perhaps far more of selfish expression of comfort at getting ‘a seat,’ and seeing the discomfort of the less fortunate.

“ Religious meetings supplied the place of worldly amusements, and were thronged by persons who never gave either their time or money to help the societies whose assemblies they crowded. I saw these crowds convulsed with laughter at stories that revolted my feelings, or appeared to me calculated to fill a Christian mind with sorrow ; I turned from the platform, as from a place of exhibition that degraded what it was meant to exalt.

“ There is a disposition in some minds to take part with what is made the subject of public and general odium. But in the Church of Rome, as constituted and exhibited in Ireland,

is seen, I verily believe, the most degraded of all religious establishments. After conversing with the more enlightened, liberal, well educated clergy of that church in other lands, one feels the effects of ignorance and vulgarity ; one sees that in proportion to the elevation of a priesthood is the moral elevation of a people.

" Yet the clamour, not of controversy, but of religious animosity, was hateful to me. I wished they would try to raise and restore what they vainly had long sought to destroy.

" Isolation was my resource, and a sort of gloomy, dissatisfied, only half-recognized scepticism, became its result. I ceased to believe in the mysterious truths I heard flippantly discussed, even by children, while those who professed to be actuated by them were just as self-willed and disagreeable, as selfish and uncharitable, as if Christ had never given them an example and a law to the contrary.

" A mind uninspired by faith must be liable to such mistakes, because such a mind is influenced only by the things that are seen. But I do not defend myself ; there was good enough under the surface, even on the surface, if I had resolved to seek for it. My heart and affections were alienated from all that I called the conventionalisms of religion ; I sought for

truth elsewhere, but turned from the source it sprung from.

" Such a neutral state was mine when I first met a being who taught me, without words, that religion was a reality, an influencing and elevating principle. But I had as yet only seen, not heard, her faith ; I had seen it, and it is true, heard something of it also, when I found her in a poor cabin on the top of the hill behind her cottage, holding up in her bed a miserably diseased and dying woman, who had no other creature to attend her. But until this evening it never entered my thoughts that Beatrice devoutly believed in the dogmas so strenuously contended for by some ladies of my acquaintance, who certainly showed me their faith in a totally different manner.

" I had learned that horrid word which was then fashionable for there is a fashion of words also—just as 'earnestness' is now, in speaking of religion, conventionalism was then used, chiefly in speaking against it. I expressed to Beatrice my antipathy to the conventionalisms of religion, and dislike to its priesthood. Had I been more among its priests, I should have disliked their craftless ; mine were prejudices, not convictions.

" But I was not aware how deeply such ex-

pressions as these would shock, or revolt, a mind, to the character of which the term spiritual, in its high and dignified meaning, though not as it is commonly used, might be most applicable.

“ And in what a crisis in my fate did that conversation occur ! Perhaps a beautiful woman never yet spoke to a wild, erring young man, whose heart was a well-spring of deep love, especially if he were an Irishman, on matters so connected with his interests, and showed him that she, like poor Margaret, ‘ trembled for his state,’ without awakening in his breast emotions less spiritual than those which filled her own, or those she desired to arouse in his.

“ A flower of the woodbine had crept in at the open window, and as Beatrice leaned her classically-formed head against the frame, that flower touched her lips. She did not see my face, or perhaps she might not have been able to mistake the real emotions of my soul. The elderly companion was absent. I withdrew the honeysuckle—and—but it was madness all, madness from its beginning to its end !

“ I only remember that Beatrice indignantly exclaimed,

“ ‘ What can this mean ? ’

" And I know that I wildly answered,
‘ Mean ! what can it mean but that I love you ?
Oh ! Beatrice, can you not love me ? ’

" I really know nothing more, recollect nothing more. I have often tried to do so ; but a drowning man, struggling with the billows, might as well try to count every wave that lifted him towards the shore and hurled him back to the abyss.

" At midnight I was standing on the sea-shore, just below that cottage ; I had lingered there, unable to leave its precincts. I looked at the ebbing tide, and felt that, like it, life was ebbing from me ; on the dreary sands of a desert existence I should again be stranded, and alone. I then desired that from my throbbing veins the life-blood too might ebb away. And even then I felt that strange spasm of the heart which told me that ebb was already begun. That pulsation was premonitory, but I had never known it before.

" Passion was calmed : had been so before ; I was left alone with my own sad reflections. I still felt the reflection of the sweet influence which had acted like oil on the surge of the billows. True, I was an exile, an outcast left to mourn the Eden I had lost for ever, the Eden whence my own error had driven me.

But that error was not an ignoble, and had been an irresistible one ; and still the sweet voice of the Beatrice I had dared to love sounded in my heart, ‘ We meet no more on earth ; God grant us grace to meet in a higher and purer state.’

“ Yet it was because she thought me unworthy of that better state she had cast me from her, rejected the love that would have elevated my soul. So I believed. But if a suspicion that she was, in this, unjust, hasty, or severe, arose, I banished it as a sin. Thus, with bowed-down head, and with the usual accompaniment of folded arms, I stood gazing on the now fast-retiring tide. My shoulder was touched. How quickly I started round ! I had heard no steps, but a man was there.

“ ‘ I would give a power,’ he said, ‘ to be as sober as you are, young man, to-night.’

“ The fellow was intoxicated, but not sufficiently so as to be insensible to the pain and remorse caused by breaking good Father Matthew’s pledge. God might have sent him there; I do not know what might have been the end of that night to me. The misery of that degraded creature was salutary. I could be of some use to him ; he was of use to me. I compared my state with his : if I had fallen, it was by no base sensual passion ; it

was the intellectual being that had soared too high, too noble a flight, and was now dragged downward to the circumstances that enveloped the mortal man. Could I never get free from these circumstances; never raise my lot in life and external condition more to a level with the capacities and tendencies of the mind that had been given me? At least I would try. If, like poor Savage, I was thrust on the sea of life ‘without an oar,’ it was better to trust to its wide expanse than to bear the petty shocks I had to endure in its shallows.

“ I resolved to arise from my low and shackled position, to be heard of, to make my name known, so as that it should reach the ear of my world, my Beatrice.

* * * * *

“ That one bright summer was over; I was grown old, very old in heart.

“ I knew that the cottage had been deserted soon after my banishment from it. But had its tenant been there, it would have been the same to me. To know that the place still held the lost pearl would have been more painful.

CHAPTER IV.

THE STONE HOUSE AT STRASS.

"I ARRIVED in London, that mighty rendezvous of all the opposites which life presents. Some of the Dublin literati had supplied me with letters of introduction to their London brothers. One of these I was told would admit me into the realms of literature and art.

"When at last I succeeded in seeing the gentleman it was addressed to, he could only spare time enough to invite me to dinner, a literary dinner, five days afterwards. As I thought my course would receive its impetus, if not reach its goal, on that eventful day, I spent the interim chiefly in expectation. It came as punctually as other days; but, accustomed to the Dublin interpretation of a dinner card, which is one hour later than that specified, while I thought I was early enough to have a few minutes' conversation with my host, I arrived so as to find the party all on foot to

“ The lady of the house apportioned me to a solitary dame who had been left unprovided for, every adjunct having been disposed of : she presented to her Mr. Albert O'Donnell ; but in order to show her that she was, ‘ though last, not least,’ she loudly and emphatically repeated, for the lady was very hard of hearing, ‘ the celebrated Mr. O'Donnell.’

“ I escorted the lady to the table, and took my place beside her. She had made some remark, to which I had responded ; but as she did not hear me, a silence followed, and not knowing how to break it, I said, with much *gaucherie*, but equal simplicity,

“ ‘ Dinner-parties are generally tiresome.’

“ The lady turned a face of intense interest towards me.

“ ‘ I beg your pardon ; I did not hear your observation.’

“ ‘ Dinner-parties are generally tiresome,’ I repeated more loudly.

“ ‘ I really am unfortunate ! I would not for worlds lose your observation ; pray be so good as to repeat it.’

“ ‘ Dinner-parties are generally tiresome,’ I almost roared.

“ And this is all I recollect of my literary dinner.

" The next morning I paid off my bill at the hotel : alas ! it showed me I had not merely lived upon hopes, for, in one sense, these would have cost less.

" I had somehow indulged the idea which such inexperience as mine was sure to create, that this first introduction to literary society was to decide my fortune ; but I could hardly have believed it would increase my finances. Still, I made no move from the hotel where I chanced to stop, until that eventful day was over : the information I gained, and imparted, on that occasion, is already known to you.

" I now went into lodgings, and felt that I was alone ; alone in London ! The very fire-irons that stood erect before the grate, the little Napoleon who stood meditating on the mantelpiece, with his hands clasped behind his back, seemed to tell me I was alone.

" How was my career to commence ? I had poor Gerald Griffin's life with me : I shuddered over it. Could I not brave the same ? He rose at last, though he did go three days without food ; he rose to some degree of fame ; but then, he ended his life in a monastery ; was this his reward, or was this the fruit of the knowledge of the world he had gained ?

" Yet still, London is the only mart for

talent; is it not there that the opera singers and dancers of the whole world are the best rewarded?

“ Though thousands of our own poor slept shelterless, or died from starvation, the wonderful talent of other lands finds in our favoured one a ready fortune. Yes, London is the only mart for talent; every one who is worthy of success meets with it there.

“ Strong in this axiom, I yet felt that I must await one of those happy accidents by which genius always attains its first notoriety. I saw that ‘the eminent physician’ is brought into practice by a lucky ‘case;’ the barrister, by a fortunate brief; the statesman, ‘by a speech, that perhaps surprised himself more than the House; even the clergyman, by, perhaps, an unprepared sermon; and the hero, by an act of bravery which he himself knew to be accidental. The material was in each, but accident developed it.

“ But the only accident that appeared likely to favour my up-hill course was a very simple and noiseless one.

“ London is so horrible a place to a lonely stranger on a Sunday, that I had gone out on a Saturday evening to Hampstead, in order to spend the day there.

" It was a clear, bright, wintry morning. You remember, perhaps, the picturesque cottage close to the great trees at that part of Hampstead which I think is called West End? I was making a sketch of it, and did not suspend the pencil from being conscious that some one had stopped behind me.

" 'Very good, Sir, very good,' said a hearty voice at my elbow; 'throw out that porch a little bit more; there, so; now the least shadow on that gable; excellent! capital taste, fine touch; pray, Sir, are you an artist?'

" 'I aspire to be one, Sir,' I replied, looking round, as I finished my sketch. 'An artist's is a glorious life.'

" 'A glorious life, Sir; yes, a glorious life. Poor Haydon, however, has just terminated his.'

" I started; for in my seclusion I had not heard what all the town was ringing with.

" With what emotion did I afterwards look at the collect for the sixth Sunday after Epiphany; the prayer that lay open before him.

" The communication caused me to join my informant, and we walked on together. His questions were rapid, and almost as rapidly answered. • In a few minutes he knew my position, my purpose in coming to London, and my determination to open to myself a career in the walks of art and literature.

“ ‘ Do so, Sir, do so,’ said my new acquaintance ; ‘ such a resolve is worthy of all praise ; to persevere in it will demand patience, energy, self-denial, and a certain toughness of constitution ; but if you have genius, you may, with the help of these qualifications, push yourself at last into notice, even without a capital to begin with.’

“ ‘ There is no country,’ I said, ‘ where talent has freer scope or is better rewarded than in England. The first offices of the state are open to talent ; the son of a workman may attain to the highest power.’

“ ‘ Quite right, Sir, quite right ; but it generally has happened in such cases, that the workman, or the workman’s father, has left the ‘ Open Sesame ’ to the youth in a well-stocked purse. Quite right, *also, that talent is well rewarded ; a little too well, sometimes, if it is during life ; and most munificently, if it is after death. Write something against the government if you want its assistance while you are living ; but if you fail in obtaining it, kill yourself. If you have a wife, or children, or dependent sisters, they will be provided for ; or, if you prefer to let nature do its work, and to die of a broken heart and over-exertion, your country will build you up a monument. Look at Scotland, Sir ;

what a trophy she is erecting to herself. A Scotchman will show that to a foreigner ; and the man will marvel at Scotland's reward of talent, and think, is it not better to build up a fine thing like that when a man is dead, than to relieve him from heart-wasting cares while he is living ? Have you breakfasted, Sir ? No ? Walk in, this is my box ; my good lady will give you a cup of coffee ; walk in, walk in.'

" We entered a beautifully neat, small house ; the comfortable parlour, so cozy and home-like, was a new and pleasant sight to me. The shiny table-cloth bore a shiny silver coffee-service. A homely citizen's wife was ready to take her place before it, and a smart citizen's daughter brought father his slippers, and helped him to exchange his tight coat for a loose wrapper. I found I was breakfasting with Mr. Blank, the picture and printseller.

" When breakfast was over, after gulping in another supply of the fresh air, which was to do the work of six days' breathing, the wrapper was put off again, the coat and boots put on, and the showily-dressed wife and daughter accompanied him and myself to the neighbouring church.

" Thus the only accident that was likely to favour me already occurred. Blank's shop

became my principal place of resort. • I suspect that if I had brought a formal letter of recommendation to the good man, it would have been almost as productive as all my other introductions. But I had met him accidentally, on a sunny Sunday morning, when he was not hampered with business, but inclined to be pleased with himself and everybody else. He was taken off guard.

“ The acquaintance of some eminent artists was offered to me ; but my finances were nearly exhausted ; I felt the necessity of getting something to do ; yet that strange thing called Irish pride, which forms one of the powerful ingredients in our chameleon character, prevented me from actually saying so.

“ One day, while loitering in the friendly shop, Blank was deciphering a curious little note, and, quickly throwing it over his counter to me, said,

“ ‘ That might suit you ; the little lady torments my life out ; but she is a good customer.’

“ The tiny note, in its contents, reminded me of Beatrice—not exactly ; but it was from a lady who was about to publish a ‘ new work,’ and wanted an artist to design vignettes.

“ ‘ Is she a clever writer ? ’

“ Blank laughed.

“ ‘ Her publishers are well satisfied ; she is rich, and her works pay. The newspapers and reviewers say every one should read them : doctors seldom take their own doses.’

. “ ‘ Well ! but it is, you know, of consequence that one’s name, if we do such things, should only appear in works of celebrity.’

“ ‘ Oh, ho ! ho, oh !’ cried the portly print-seller, pushing back his fresh-coloured visage ; ‘ are you there already, young man ? Time enough to be so conceited in twenty years to come. Why, do you not see that the race-course is crowded, thronged ? To move on in order is your only chance ; if you fall, you will be trampled on, or left behind unnoticed ; but if you can creep on, you may, in due time, get a sight of the winning-post.’

“ His words fell like lead on the pulses of my heart ; all that I had proposed to myself seemed to fade away. Michael Angelo, I said to myself, belonged to a past age, an age passed away for ever. But I was not a Michael Angelo, or any age would have been mine.

“ ‘ Well,’ said common sense, ‘ I will call on this lady.’

“ ‘ Do so,’ said Blank ; ‘ she appoints this evening at half-past eight o’clock, as time presses ; her publisher is impatient. But make

up your mind to obey her whims, and put up with her manner ; else you will not be her artist long. She is a spoiled child, an only one, and allowed to do as she pleases. By the bye, her father may not thank me for sending you in her way : but forewarned, fore-armed ; take care of her and yourself.'

" I suppose the melancholy of my countenance became too apparent, for my patronising friend added with more gravity,

" 'Take my advice, young man, and do not think of marrying till you are between forty and fifty years of age. Marriage is an artist's ruin.'

" 'It shall never be mine,' was my reply.

" At the appointed time I was at — square, and for the first time in my life was introduced to a lady's boudoir. So unlike the cottage on the hill, with its flowers, and honeysuckle-screened windows, and sea and mountain views !

" This was a pretty museum : it was hung in blue brocaded silk ; statuettes, paintings, vases, imitations from Pompeii, and endless *et cetera*, left just space enough for new books, magazines, manuscripts, and sketches of never-to-be-finished designs.

" Sunk into a large *fanteuil* of the same blue

silk, and arrayed in an evening costume of a fantastic, yet not ungraceful fashion, some shades lighter in colour than the cerulean blue of her boudoir, was a fairy-like beauty: fair and bright as a young Aurora; her long ringlets of paly brown curling round her pretty face and neck.

“ She partly rose at my entrance, but sunk back quickly, leaving me to stand before her. Not many words, however, had been exchanged before a blush, really like that of shame, heightened the colour on her cheeks, and she desired me to take a seat, with a look of doubtfulness as to whether her little airs of queenly command were not rather out of place.

“ We were soon good friends. There was not a bit of harm in her or her books: they were both very transparent. I knew this on my first interview. Soon afterwards, instead of acting dictator, she began slyly to get me to dictate.

“ Poor little thing! the spoiled child of fashion and fortune; she mistook adventitious circumstances for personal merits. Her books were in print; her books were praised. That was enough; she did not ask whether her father were the richer or poorer for their sale; and

to him, astonish'd at her talents, delighted at her finding a source of amusement, and elated by her fame, the publisher's balance-sheet was a matter of indifference.

“The fair Angeline looked on the struggles of genius with profound contempt; the idea of a poor creature writing for daily bread! so beneath the dignity of literature! She held up her pretty hands, that appeared unsmeared by ink, and turned aside her ringleted head in horror at such baseness.

“Angie” wrote the most excellent moral tales, to show us how people acted very wrong with the best possible results: her books were pretty nursery stories, with real grown-up men and women for baby actors: they all acted and spoke and felt like good or naughty children; but they possessed one great claim to distinction, which all books do not possess—if they could do no good, they certainly could do no harm: and they were all great people; every one of them entitled.

“What a contrast to Beatrice was Angeline! How often in that luxurious boudoir was I reminded of the window looking on the sea! the unadorned little parlour of the Irish cottage! Beatrice knew comparatively little of what is termed the current literature of the day:

she had lived more in that of the past ; and with a keen faculty for observation, and sound good sense directing it, this made her a still more agreeable companion to a man of intellect; while her elegant taste and refined judgment imparted to her manner those purely feminine charms, without which mere intellect is, in women, more revolting than attractive.

“ Little Angeline knew every pamphlet, and every ‘article’ that made its appearance ; her ‘publisher,’ notorious man, took that charge on himself. The day was that of ‘ article literature,’ and Angeline was an excellent specimen of its results.

“ She sometimes talked to me of Ireland ; that ‘ dear, wild, savage land, which it must be so romantic to live in ; for there was no romance in England now.’ But once, in a more pedantic mood, of which, too, she had her fits, she remarked how extraordinary it was that Ireland should have retrograded so much ;

“ ‘ For,’ she said, ‘ I recollect that Julius Cæsar, in his Commentaries, asserts that the Irish were the most Christian people he had met with.’

“ ‘ Oh ! ’ I remarked, ‘ you must remember that the Christianity of Julius Cæsar’s times was of a different character from that of ours.’

“ ‘True,’ she replied.

“ But either from a physiognomical scrutiny, or a review of her Roman history, she broke out, after a few moments’ reflection, into a pretty little laugh.

“ ‘Well, what a blunder I have made; I forgot Julius Cæsar lived before Christ! Of course, I never read his Commentaries, though I talked as if I had.’

“ There was a candour about her, a real simplicity, which, if they had not been overlaid by the rubbish of the age and the accidents of position in society, would have rendered her a pleasing, loveable little girl.

“ As it was, Angeline was a being, the nineteenth century alone could have produced; Beatrice, a woman, who might have lived in any age.

“ Every day I saw the ‘young authoress,’ the ‘New star in the firmament of fancy,’ as the provincial papers styled her. If I failed to appear, I received the sweetest little note, fairy-like, and rose-tinted as herself, which either summoned her attendant sprite, or made it plain that I ought to appear uncalled.

“ One day she asked me if I could take her portrait for ‘her publisher.’

“ ‘I dare not,’ was my answer. I really

meant that I had not skill enough to produce *one which, I believed, would satisfy the very laudable amount of vanity she possessed.*

“ But the fair Angeline understood my words differently: she cast down her eyes, coloured, and looked almost sad.

“ She next wanted me to tell her the most artistic mode of arranging her hair for this sitting.

“ ‘ Let it arrange itself,’ I said; ‘ such lovely locks require no art.’

“ A little sigh broke forth, and, with an air of some confusion, Angeline hastily arose, and said she had forgotten an engagement that must be kept.

“ On the following day I found one of these fair tresses lying on the table, which was strewn with papers and drawings; I bent down to examine it, and at the instant she entered the boudoir.

“ ‘ Some day,’ she said, half averting her face, ‘ that lock of hair may be of value. I am sick of giving away autographs, and you have had enough in my notes, so I will give you that lock of hair to remember the author of _____, &c. &c. &c. &c. &c.’

“ I felt that she imagined I had fallen in love, and was sorry for the pain she fancied she

must cause. I took up the tress, as, in duty bound, and pressing it with one hand to my heart, with the other was raising her fair fingers to my lips, when in jumped a fine-looking man, in a black coat and white neckloth, who stared horribly at the scene he had intruded on.

“The fair Angeline turned her head, darted towards him, took the breasts of his coat in each hand, and poking up her pretty face to his, in the most affectionate manner, began chattering in a whisper a great deal of explanation, of which the words ‘Don’t mind—poor artist—souvenir—great genius,’ &c. met my ear.

“The young man took her hand and led her like a convicted child into the ante-chamber. I waited for a few minutes where I was, and hearing or seeing no one, I went away with the lock of hair.

“A sort of impression, rather than any defined opinion, made me deem it better to keep away the next morning from the little literary lady. I expected my usual *biguetto*, but none came.

“The following day I actually stayed in the house to receive it; I felt thrown out of my course by this omission: the boudoir had become to me almost a necessity, an unhealthy

stimulant; I was languid and restless when a sudden change was made. It was a dull misty afternoon; I had no resource but looking occasionally into the murky streets, or listening to their heart-deadening noises. The habit of application had been broken through; the restlessness of expectation rendered me idle. Angeline had been to me a pretty amusement, which had easily made me turn traitor to the cause to which I had devoted myself. I had lost a deal of time; yet I had learned even something from her: I had gained a sight, too, of the complexion of a certain class of society which I had scarcely imagined before: the fourth or fifth rate class of the multifarious order, called in London literary society.

“I was coolly summing up my amount of profit and loss, when a stranger entered my room. It was the gentleman of the boudoir: he was a rector and a chaplain, and something else besides; but though he might probably yet be a bishop, I verily believed he had come to demand satisfaction, or the lock of hair; neither of which I resolved to give him. Without a glance at my poor apartment, he seated himself by the fire, and in a very off-hand manner said he had come to offer me his thanks!

“ ‘*For what, pray?*’

“ *For the services I had rendered his cousin, his intended bride.*

“ ‘*Oh!*’ I ejaculated deliberately, as if a new light broke in on me; ‘*I hoped her work would be successful.*’

“ Not my artistic services; no, these might be more valuable elsewhere. Then dashing off in a manly, open manner, he gave me a brief *résumé* of their united history; declared Aageline to be the best-hearted, most delightful little darling in existence, but the most inflated, deluded, wilful, and misled of all spoiled pets.

“ ‘*I had hoped,*’ he said, ‘*that the reviewers would have had the charity to put an extinguisher on ‘the new star,’ or the publishers have had the honesty to tell her the truth;* but unfortunately her station allowed her to become an attraction to the fiftieth-rate order of literary pretenders; they have fawned upon and flattered her, until she fancied herself a De Stael or George Sand, in a less masculine costume. Every youth who wrote verses to the moon, and every lady who longed to make her name known in print, sought her influence to obtain them a place in the poet’s corner of a magazine, or an acceptable reception from her publisher. You were the only person of real

talent, genius, and honesty, with whom it was her good fortune to be on terms of intimacy. Had I been aware of that intimacy, I confess I might have interfered; but I rejoice I did not.' He paused, and looked more serious.

" 'I have lately,' he added, 'had grave doubts as to my fair cousin's suitability to be a parson's spouse; but it has been a long engagement, and one it would cost me much to break off. Angeline and myself have been attached to each other from childhood; the knowledge of our engagement has always obtained her still more freedom from her parents; and I believe that though our marriage was, at their desire, not to take place until she was twenty-one, an age now fast approaching, the heart of neither has ever strayed to any other object.'

" 'But it is with no little joy that I now find her returning to her native good sense, casting off her affectation of authorship airs and ridiculous pedantry, for the assumption of which seldom has there been a brain or heart less adapted.'

" 'She has told me, with that candour which always characterized her, even in her most artificial condition, that the constant intercourse she has lately had with a man of cul-

tivated mind, superior intellect, and genius which borrowed nothing from adventitious circumstances, has done more in correcting her follies than all my lectures could ever have done. She detests her books; despises the crude sentiments and unformed notions she has laid before the world, and is ready to come down to my country parsonage, and teach by example to the wives and daughters of my parishioners some plainer, less dubious moral truths than she has been setting off in the crooked conduct, the broken and mended hearts, the distorted marriages, the blunders and follies of heroes and heroines; who, when I read of their omissions and commissions in the pages of a novel, appear to verify the old-fashioned idea that people of talent and genius are deficient in common sense, and know not how to regulate their own affairs in the world, or those of other people either; for no one but a novelist could fancy such clever people, as heroes and heroines are described to be, making such stupid blunders, doing precisely what they ought not, in such a crisis, to have done, and what they wished not to do, and leaving undone the only thing that was required to make them happy, and bring the third volume to a conclusion.

“ ‘ Well, you know all this as well as I do,’ he concluded, rising up; ‘ so now I have only to give you the fair convert’s message. She desires me to say that whenever you chance to look at a certain tress of hair, you are to think of it as, a souvenir, not of ‘ a celebrated authoress,’ but of your literary *protégée*.’

“ I made a low bow, and turning to the portfolio I had had in the boudoir, drew out from it the aforesaid tress. It had remained unregarded in the spot I had placed it in.

“ ‘ I should find it hard,’ I said, ‘ to obey such a command, and therefore shall act more dutifully by consigning it to one who may be at liberty to regard it with any sentiments or recollections he thinks appropriate. The treasure will then, also, have a safer depository than my poor portfolio; you may keep it next your heart; I dare not.’

“ He took the pretty ringlet without the least hesitation, and put it in the left pocket of his waistcoat.

“ ‘ Now then,’ he said, ‘ I have only to leave you my Angeline’s note.’

“ He shook hands with me, and departed.

“ The note was very pretty, and not very short. It really recapitulated what her lover had said about my influence, &c., which I had

received merely as the handsome come-off of a man of the world, who wished, in the most agreeable manner, to get rid of a nuisance.

“ We should not be too hard on what are deservedly called people of the world ; sometimes, perhaps, they mean what they say. Certainly, my opinion of that rather dashing young clergyman was much improved by reading Angeline’s note.

“ Her regret at the termination of our intercourse was apparently sincere, and she ascribed it to the reasons he had insinuated—her resolution to learn more, and write less, and her approaching marriage. She did not, however, hint at the possibility of a future meeting ; her adieu was final, and I believed she felt it, for there was a large round blot on the word ‘ Angeline.’

“ Within it was enclosed a bank note for a considerable sum, a payment for my ‘ etchings.’

“ I felt a deeper want of Angeline and the boudoir after I had received that letter. There is a strongly attaching principle in the sense of having been of use to any one : we naturally think better of the person to whose benefit we contribute.

“ I had also been introduced to all the elegancies and refinements of life, which har-

EVELYN.

monized 'too well with my frame of mind and untrained tastes. They had been a delightful relief to the dull, hard, monotonous aspect of *my twelve feet square apartment*, which had not even the inspiring, naked misery of a garret in Grub Street; it was all hideously 'in order.'

CHAPTER V.

THE STONE HOUSE AT STRASS.

"MONTHS passed on: the spring, late and cold, should have been dawning into summer, but no trace of spring or summer was seen from the window of the great dreary chamber I then occupied, in one of the once renowned narrow streets leading down from the Strand to the river.

"This large room I had made a studio, the successor of that under the green table. I had a small sleeping-closet off it; and here I began in earnest the artist life I had set before me, and in which little Angeline and her books had made a wide break.

"Here I commenced the double trade to which I meant to devote the best, most active years of my life, the first powers of a heart which panted for action—painting and writing, art and literature. Nature had filled my soul with poetry, and poetry overflowed, in its distinct

yet kindred forms, on the canvas and on paper. I wanted to write a work which should embody and develope the history of a real human heart, such as we feel it, not such as we generally read of it.

“I was painting Thorwaldsen’s beautiful bas-relief of the Child and the Guardian Angel; this gave me the design for the book. I made Beatrice, in both, the guardian angel. She looked beautiful on the canvas, with her soft wings, and face of heavenly, protecting love; that exquisite hand, which I had so often admired as an artistical study, extended over the head of the young world-wanderer.

“And I fancied, too, that she looked passing fair, when her beautiful mind and elevated conceptions were faintly shadowed forth in words.

“Thus, with Beatrice in person and mind before me, I turned from the pencil to the pen, and communed with her still, and still made her teach the wild, erring heart that had once known her blessed influence. No doubt my double work would appear the mere act of an imaginative mind to those who were uninitiated into its history; but separately I think they might have had their admirers—for nature and truth always have—if they had ever been finished, ever been seen by any eye save my own.

"The wanderings of the erring, untaught child-man, and the holy influence of the guardian angel, were lessons of wisdom to me, for the heart teaches itself; and from what a downward course may not my emblematized Beatrice have preserved me?

"With this, my ever new delight, solitude ceased to be horrible; the society of most, if not all, ot. or artists was avoided; I only cared to live till my work was completed. But it was to remain unfinished.

"It once, we are told, came to pass that the whole circulation of the great artery of London life which flows from its 'mighty heart,' was stopped, because an old lady was slow in getting out her threepence when the omnibus was passing Temple Bar. I often traced that awful artery of the mucky air, on my way to and from St. Paul's. An accidental stoppage occurred just as I reached Temple Bar, and the weight of the accumulated vehicles pressed upon me, when they began to move, from being able to cross to the other side.

Perhaps no one who did not share in the rush and hurry of business, which renders that scene unlike any other in the world, ever contemplated it with dissimilar thoughts to these. I then employed my disengaged mind. The

mass of human beings for ever passing that great old gate, their history, their fates so various, their destiny the same—on, through tumult, to the grave.

“ The buzz about me, the press of time-driven creatures, became almost unheard as I stood in that strange meditating-place. I was startled from a brief reverie by a throb at the heart: it reminded me of what I had felt on the sea-shore before the cottage.

“ ‘ Hah ! ’ I said to myself, ‘ is this death ? ’

“ The idea filled me with a horrible dread. I believe my arms were unconsciously raised.

“ ‘ Not here, oh, my God ! ’ I murmured ; ‘ not here, amid this mass of worldliness, and moral degradation ; not here let me drop away from life, unknown, unthought of ; trampled beneath the hurrying feet of business, regarded by the dull glance of selfishness ; picked from the mire by the cold, careless hand of official charity ! ’

“ My looks had attracted the eye of a patrolling policeman ; I saw that, supposing me to be deranged, he was making me the object of his solicitude.

“ I walked on ; the fluttering ceased ; and when I entered my room I sat down before my Beatrice, and said to myself, ‘ I shall live to complete her, body and soul.’

“ As I breathed the words, half-aloud, as the solitary do, a choking sensation came on. I rose up; there was a rush of blood; a vessel had burst.

“ Pass it over in the silence it deserves; pass over all that followed!

“ The poor, sordid, parish doctor, proportioning his solicitudes to the prospect of his pay; the more sordid landlady, who greatly disliked the notion of a death in her house, but still more disliked the trouble of trying to keep me alive. Ah! how blessed appeared then to me the memory of my dear Irish nurse. How delightful would have been her rough cabin; how pleasant the offices of her great red hands; how soothing her dear native brogue.

“ Alone! sick, ill, powerless, moneyless, in a great, busy, cold-hearted London lodging-house. Do you want to know mortal misery? If you have tried that, you have known it.

“ To lie there, and die in patience, was all I at first thought of. But when the approach of death became less apparent, resignation gave way to anxiety. I said to myself, I would still finish my works; I would leave my name after me, although it was ‘writ on water.’ I would have Beatrice one day to look at them, and say, ‘This is me: this child is what he might have become beneath my hand.

"I rose up out of my bed, dressed, and walked into my quaint studio.

"I sat before the easel, but my hand could not hold the brush; I feared to make a stroke. I turned to the pen: the brain was full, almost to bursting, with floating ideas, thoughts and images, that appeared most fair and true and brilliant; but they would not syllable themselves into words; they would not become tangible; they were spirits that haunted the brain, but fled from being revealed to the light.

"I gave up the effort, for the inspiration that seemed to urge me to make it was over. I reclined back, and gazed at my portrait. A tap came to my door; the tap of a strong hand made soft: my voice could not be heard without: my doctor always burst in unannounced. I rose and staggered to the door.

"An old benevolent-looking gentleman was there. I thought it was a mistake, but he asked was a Mr. O'Donnell there; and, at the instant, forth from the head of the stairs glided an apparition—Beatrice!—my own, living, actual Beatrice!

"She was in my great dreary room, and I was holding both her hands, bathed in my tears; and hers—yes, hers—fell too, when weakness of body still more than mind caused

mine, for the only time I recollect, "to break forth ; and the grave old man stood looking on.

" But up to those deep, lovely eyes rose that look of calm self-command, which somehow always dashed my aspiring, bounding heart back again to the abyss it had sprung from.

" Beatrice turned from me, and coolly said,

" ' Well, doctor, do you allow his removal ? '

" ' Decidedly ; better air is the first object.' *etc.*

" ' Your servant, then, you will allow to stay here, and arrange what is necessary, until I send mine with the carriage to take him to Richmond.'

" ' My dear,' said the old man—he was an eminent, but retired physician, who did not hide his talents in a napkin, though he refused any longer to make money by it—' My dear, I will stay with him myself, and it will perhaps be just as well that my carriage, and not yours, should take him to his lodgings at Richmond. You may, therefore, go and make the arrangements there you spoke of; indeed,' he said, in a whisper audible to me, ' you are better anywhere than here; this excitement may be fatal.'

" ' What do you mean ? ' I cried; but when the words were uttered, I fainted. I thought,

when the frightful sense of returning consciousness came on, that I felt Beatrice's hand on my forehead—had felt it there, even in that temporary death; but when I opened my eyes she was gone. The vision had passed away; I believed it had been one.

"When he saw me recovered, the old doctor also left me, as he had forgotten some directions to his servants.

"I was left alone to dream, and not wish to awake, until a footman, who, though smartly equipped, represented, as servants generally do, the character of his master or mistress, I knew not which, entered my soon-to-be-deserted studio, with all the respect he could pay a prince, to say he had orders to pack my portmanteau, or other effects. The 'other effects' included my Beatrice; I managed to do that myself; but she never saw it. The man was attended by my now obsequious landlady, apologizing, pitying, wondering, and insinuating that only for her I should have been dead.

"As I was ready to go out, the poor doctor burst in, his lank, long hair staring, his eyes wild with excitement. A carriage had called at his door; a fine footman had asked what was due to him; he was actually losing a good patient when he had calculated only on losing

by a bad one. He wished me to take his arm instead of William's; he mounted on the carriage steps to give his last directions; to urge me to be guided by no other advice; but if 'my friends'—the day before I had none—wished for another opinion, he would be happy to meet any of the faculty.

" 'I was desired to tell you, Sir,' said William, 'that your bill may be sent to Doctor ——, where the servant has orders to pay it.'

" 'But the gentleman is going to Richmond?'

" 'Yes, Sir; but your bill will be paid at Doctor ——'s. Allow me, Sir;'" and politely obliging the 'medical man' to descend, he shut the door.

" As soon as he had moved off, William opened it again.

" 'I beg your pardon, Sir, but I did not like to say so before that gentleman, lest he should step in; but, Sir, I was desired, if you had no objection, to sit inside with you, lest the motion should make you faint.'

" Was it Beatrice gave that order? it was so like her.

" The carriage stopped at the door of a pleasant lodging-house on Richmond Hill. The pure breezes of Heaven, my native breath—

once more were breathed. A tidy old widow ran out to receive me; there was a green porch and green verandah, and to the weary, town-sick invalid, the sight of these did good. I was coming forth from a dungeon life. So the restored sufferer always feels to be. But to me that house was a luxurious one. The soft arm-chairs and easy sofas would alone have afforded that sense of relaxation which I could never enjoy in my hard, prim-looking rooms, with their cold horse-hair-covered furniture, curtains made never to be drawn, and sofas that never were to be injured. But in addition to this air of ease and comfort, some books and drawings had been already put about the pleasant room, to give it an aspect of home, and remove the alien feeling which seizes one on entering a lodging.

“ All this caught my eye through the door, which lay wide open as I mounted the stairs, supported by William, and followed by my widowed attendant. But there, when I entered, stood one object that would have made the desert a favoured dwelling-place to me. Beatrice stood smiling, though gravely, on the hearth-rug by the cheery fire; and sunk into the great chair was the portly figure of the good physician, her late guardian. She was

there waiting to receive me, to welcome me to the blessed abode her care had provided. Her hand, extended to greet me, also guided me to a seat. I dropped into it, and when I looked up she was gone, and the old doctor's fingers were on my pulse.

"I could not conceal from myself, either then, or on his subsequent visits, that the view he took of my case was a gloomy one. But death appeared to me now in a more soothing form than it had lately done. Beatrice was just the creature to yield to the last earthly request I could make, and lay her own hand on the eyes that might not otherwise be closed.

"My 'accident' at Hampstead had led to another, for it was at the shop of my print-selling acquaintance she had seen my drawings, and finally discovered my illness."

"Mr. Blank had told her merely that the poor young man was dying.

"She got my address, learned my situation, and acted with the decision that characterized her.

"That night I slept with less difficulty and horror. The next day a light carriage, elegantly equipped, stopped at the door; William appeared with orders to take me for a drive if I felt able for it. Those charming drives about

Twickenham, or Bushey Park—ah ! if Beatrice had accompanied them, I should not have thought, with regret, of the Irish car and the mountain scenes of Wicklow. But she came not : the too intoxicating draught was wisely withheld.

“ A note, however, often came ; the most household thing in the world. Nothing of Angeline about it. Some sage advice about my health, some warning against study, or some direction as to my modest *ménage*. And I had thought her poor and struggling as myself. I had known her in the unassuming simplicity of her Irish cottage life, and never imagined that she was rich and independent, and able to command all the luxuries of a worldly existence, while quite willing to dispense with them. Would that I had known she was rich ! A great lady would never have been to me what the unassuming Beatrice became.

“ When I had been about a week in my new abode, I heard the fall of steps follow the stopping of the carriage. I felt, though I did not see, that Beatrice was approaching me. Each step on the stairs caused a separate throb in the heart where the pulses of life appeared to be bounding to their goal. The machine was wound for an allotted space, but the spring

was broken, and I heard the whirr with which it was running down.

“ Beatrice entered, and I felt no more ; but she was not alone,—an elderly man and woman were with her. The latter ran, and threw her arms about my neck, and kissed me. The salutation was startling.

“ They were my uncle and aunt Patrick, whom I had never before seen.

“ But Beatrice advanced, and presenting her hand, while she averted her face, bent down, so that her words were heard by myself only.

“ ‘ If I have acted without your knowledge, forgive me. Unable myself to give you the care and society your state requires, I could only feel at ease in consigning you to those of the kind friends I met in Ireland, whose prompt response to my summons left me no time to inform you of the bold step I had taken.’

“ I could only venture an answer by the slightest pressure of the hand I held ; I trembled at the temerity ; but looked in vain for one glance of those beloved eyes whose repelling power I had so often known.

“ And now I was one of a family ; the friendly domestic society of my good uncle and aunt were of great benefit to me. I saw Bea-

trice now more frequently, and the old doctor less so.

“ One day he came, and had a long cross-examination with me. The next was a sunny morning. The prospect from the window over the lovely vale of Richmond was enchanting. My uncle and aunt were out ; I was gazing at the view from the window, when Beatrice’s carriage drove up to the door.

“ She entered, and sat down on a low chair, while I occupied the sofa, with my back to the window.

“ ‘ How do you feel now ? ’ was her question.

“ ‘ Most happy.’

“ ‘ I mean as to your health, of course ? ’

“ ‘ With this fresh air, and this sweet view, I must be well.’ I was looking at the face before me while I spoke.

“ ‘ It is very pleasant,’ she answered, looking straight out through the window ; ‘ you do not, then, apprehend danger now ? ’

“ ‘ Danger ? —*cela dépend*—but no,’ for I feared to make her really angry with this quibbling ; ‘ no, I cannot afford to die yet.’

“ Beatrice rose up, and went to look at something on the table ; then how gravely, yet with what deep kindness she spoke, calling me for the first time by my Christian name.

“‘ Albert,’ she said, ‘ will you think of me as a sister ? Will you let me speak to you as to a brother, who deeply engaged a sister’s interest ? as a friend who would wish to atone for an unintentional injury ? ’

“‘ Speak ! ’

“‘ I agree, then, with you, that you could not afford to die yet ; you would, I fear, lose much ; for I fear, oh ! greatly fear, you are not yet trained for that higher state which follows death.’

“‘ Is such the end, then,’ I said with bitterness, ‘ for which you would prolong my life ? ’

“‘ It is ; but if it were attained, I do not say I should desire to prolong it no further. Oh no ! I believe that the intellects and faculties, powers or principles, which God has given us, can be trained and cultivated in this life, so as to lead to a proportionate development in that which is to succeed it ; and that as their measure is reached here, will be the fulness or scantiness of their ‘measure hereafter. Therefore, a long life appears to me a great blessing, when it is made an apprenticeship to a higher state of being. I cannot think, as some most pious people do, that this world is a thing of nought, this life a boon that is almost better withdrawn, provided that in resigning it we

can feel our peace is made with God through the atonement of the Redeemer. That blessed sacrifice was offered to restore to us the exercise of our immortal powers, to open to us the entrance to God which the fall of man from his high estate had closed ; but this time-state is only 'the school of the spirit, and this mortal breath but the germ of an immortal existence ; as it grows here, it must grow hereafter ; and I believe that, according to the culture bestowed upon it, will be its expansion in a state, the nature of which is as yet to us unknown.

“ ‘I would wish you to live, Albert, and not only to languish out a precarious existence, but, if God’s will might so be done, to live in the full exercise of your intellectual powers, and in the full enjoyment of those large capacities with which you are endowed ; to live so that such genius as God has given you might be raised and purified ; yet such talents as you possess aspire to more than all that even three-score years and ten, at their best estate, can achieve.’

“ Beatrice ceased, yet I was silent ; but even then a new light broke in on a darkened soul ; the cold gloom of a scepticism, resulting rather from vexation at the visible things of a professed religion, than from a deliberate decision

of the judgment on the unreality of the doctrines on which it was founded, had already given way ; but her words presented a new aspect of religion, a tangible form of doctrine, a something beyond the assent to a certain creed, or the notion that religion consisted in abstinence from one set of amusements, and eager pursuance of another.

“ Yet, with all this, some bitterness against Beatrice was in my heart, for I felt that she thought more of my spiritual than temporal happiness. She desired my restoration ; but why ? Thus did I half interpret that noble mind.

“ There was a silence between us, and I pettishly asked,

“ ‘ What then do you wish me do ? What is the doctor’s opinion ? If I am to die, I should like to know it.’

“ ‘ He thinks,’ said Beatrice gently, ‘ that your case is not hopeless. You have studied too much, lived too many years in a very few. Your recent anxiety,’ she added, turning away her head, ‘ has produced its natural result on a temperament so excitable. The mind survives when the shrine is shivered. Albert, I have felt, I do feel most acutely, my accountability. Stop !—one word of this must never be uttered by me again, nor answered by you ! Suffice it.

that so far as my power will allow, in the only way in which I ever can make reparation, I am most anxious to do so; I have prayed to God to allow me to do so. Albert, you must travel; our mutual friend, the doctor, advises it, as the only prescription he can now propose. Your uncle and aunt are willing to accompany you. She, poor lady, is a little alarmed, but I have said you will take care of her, if she will take care of you. You will, I trust, return to us in renovated health; but whatever be the will of God, my friend'—

"Beatrice burst into tears—there! leave them to flow—such tears are twice blessed.

"Perhaps it was with the mortal agony of one struggling for life that I murmured,

"‘Beatrice! Beatrice! let me die with you! let me live where you will; let me toil like the mole in darkness; let me eat the bread of scarcity while I live; but oh! let me die with you! do you guide my soul to light, do you close my eyes in death; I ask no other boon.’"

* * * * *

Here ended the narrative of Albert O'Donnell. That he had not yet died, and that he had gone to travel, were two facts, which we could add to its rather abrupt termination.

CHAPTER VI.

ZILLERTHAL.

JUST before we left the Stone House at Strass, Aunt Patrick came into the apartment of the *gnädig Frau*, looking very rosy, and much delighted with herself.

"My dear, where do you suppose I have been? Now guess."

"On the top of the Orteler Spitz, that giant mountain we hope soon to see."

"No, indeed; but just as strange for me. I have been in a chapel! Yes, upon my word. It is down there, in a green, beautiful spot, and its back just resting against the mountain. The door was wide open, so I had the curiosity to go in, as no creature was to be seen. It was so quiet, I declare I could have almost knelt down and prayed. I would not do that, you know, for the world; but still I felt somehow as if I could calmly collect my thoughts, and be quite devotional, while I was

sitting in quietness there ; and that, you know, when one is knocked about so, and hurrying hither and thither, is a great blessing, dear."

" It is, indeed ; I wish it were a blessing we possessed in our land. I never recollect a time when I did not desire that our churches might stand always open, instead of an access once a week being permitted by means of beadles and sextons and pew-openers ; that free admittance was given to Protestant as well as to Roman Catholic churches ; that the one, as the other does, might invite poor, houseless wanderers, or refugees from domestic noise and distraction, the thoughtless lover of pleasure, or the busy follower of the world, to share the sanctuary offered to the devout and meditative mind. To enter there as if the house of God were a common sanctuary, where the world and its distinctions might be forgotten, and that future state, in which visions of equality and fraternity can alone be realized, become emblematised in the earthly tabernacles where earthly divisions should not appear.

" An open church, in the full sense, where high and low, rich and poor, might freely and at all times enter, to pour out their hearts together to one All-Father, or to rest, a little space, retired from worldly distractions, in self-

recollection and thoughts of eternal things, might be a great means of restoring that reverential piety in England which is well-nigh lost."

"I think, do you know, it might be a good thing," said Aunt Patrick; but added, "it would never do in England or Ireland, however."

"Why not?"

"Why, in Ireland it would be too like the Papists; and in England, you know, the idle children would spoil and dirty the churches, and the thieves steal away the books and cushions out of the pews."

"Oh! Aunt Patrick! how severe you are!"

"Me, dear, severe! I am sure there's nothing severe in that, it's only the truth."

"How awful the picture you undesignedly draw, then, of the fatal want of religious training; training, the want of which, Sunday schools, good as they are in their way, as a substitute, can never meet. Pastoral training of the young would be the only means of imparting that lost reverential spirit which would make even children consider the house of God a sacred place."

"At all events," said Aunt Patrick, "I do not think real Protestants would ever go to

such open churches, for you know the poor deluded Papists only go there to say their prayers."

Albert O'Donnell laughed.

"And pray, aunt, what do we, real Protestants, go there for?"

"Why, certainly, we do go to pray also ; but not in the same way, Berty ; we go there to hear the preacher ; and we wouldn't go to any church, open or shut, where we did not like the preacher. But you know they only think of prayers, and believe that a church is a holier place to pray in than a house ; and, perhaps, they wouldn't care to pray there either, unless there was some image, or saint, or crucifix to pray to."

"Well, in our church I hope we shall never pray to any one of these," I answered ; "but still I wish the experiment in other respects were tried ; and that the religious training of the people of England could be evidenced even by the fact that our churches were allowed to stand open without being guarded by a couple of policemen. I heard a clergyman, to whom I once spoke on the subject, say, with a laugh, 'Let them pray at home ;' but that reverend gentleman, in his quiet study, might, even with his high spiritual attainments,

have found it not so easy to compose his mind to prayer, had one miserable room contained himself, a distracted wife, and noisy, crying children."

"Allow me to change the subject," said O'Donnell; "for I came to ask you if you could suffer us to lift you now into the carriage, and convey you into the Zillerthal. Rayner, the old Tyrolean minstrel, who used to enchant England long ago, has a neat *cabaret* at Fügen. We are tired of this place, and think you would enjoy yourself more there."

My consent was gladly given; and with scarcely a twinge I arrived at Rayner's pretty little Tyrolese inn, established by means of English gold.

Sweet were the songs that evening with which we were serenaded. Rayner, his son, and pretty daughter, sang for us together, and sang *de bon cœur*, for we were from the land where foreign *artistes* make money. Zillerthal is esteemed the prettiest and most fertile of the Tyrolean vales. The Alps that bound it are peaked with snow, even when reflecting back the rays of the summer sun; the bright green pastures of the sloping banks are divided by the Ziller, or quivering river, and up high upon them rise the pretty and numerous

churches, with their green wooden steeples; and up, high, and higher still, wherever a shepherd may feed his flock, or a daring mountain-huntsman may pursue the chase, there are to be seen the memorials of their faith, or incentives to their devotion. The mountain chapel looks down from its dizzy height, and seems to say the wanderers are cared for.

Yet this sweet vale, with all its unfeigned and simple devotion, was the scene of a singular revolution, which ended in a decided persecution.

Not more than a dozen years since, the history of Protestantism in Zillerthal was one of deep, and even romantic interest. I wanted, from personal inquiry, to ascertain whether the faith of the patriotic Tyrolers, which had conquered even their love of country, and enabled them to go forth as exiles to a less loved land, were indeed attended with “the wisdom which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.”

So seldom, alas! have contests for “the faith once delivered to the saints” been attended by wisdom such as that, a doubt might well arise whether, in a remote valley of Tyrol, a mere fanatic enthusiasm might not have sup-

plied its place, and have led a portion of its people from one form of faith, without supplying them with anything better than what an excited imagination and fervid feelings could temporarily produce in another.

I found that their neighbours had nothing to say against the exiled Protestants of the Zillerthal. Our host gravely informed us that their new doctrines had caused discussions, “and certainly *der Kaiser* could not permit that; for while the Tyrolese defended their country against the French and their Bavarian allies, when Monsieur Napoleon would give it to the latter crown, the Emperor of Austria, for whom they fought in fighting for themselves, knew well that they detested and feared both the French and their allies, still more as infidels than as tyrants or usurpers; and in reward of their fidelity and astonishing exploits, he made a promise that never could be revoked; namely, that no other than the Roman Catholic religion should ever be allowed to exist in Tyrol.

“Therefore,” said our host, “*der Kaiser* could not act otherwise than he did: and the people who chose to forsake our church were obliged to abandon their land.”

“But are they happy in Prussia?”

“ Ach ! that is not to be believed ! The old people, it is true, are dying out ; the children may grow up to like a foreign soil ; but all who remember Tyrol have their hearts in their mountain homes.”

To me this history is one of too much interest to be thus casually introduced. The history of religious persecution is, indeed, in general, pretty much the same. It is true that in the Zillerthal it was not conducted with any violent cruelty ; but its interest to me arises from the fact that the Protestantism of the entire of semi-infidel France would appear less strange than that of five hundred persons of a Tyrolean valley : so completely is the devout superstition which constitutes that religion entwined with their whole lives, and made a portion of their daily thoughts.

We spent a peaceful Sunday at the Beym Bräu, in the village of Zell : .. more interesting sight than the church close to our windows exhibited at a very early hour on that day I never witnessed. It was thronged through the whole space of the wide aisle, and the court and steps adjoining it were crowded with a fresh congregation; for divers of them came from far, and one went in nearly as another came out. The picturesque costumes, the pleasant, handsome

faces, the grave yet rank demeanour,' and the fine music that pealed forth, solemn and deep, from the crowded edifice, rendered it a temptation to loiter in the open window and look and listen.

There were such a number of fine-looking men, old, middle-aged, and young; their free, firm step telling of liberty and independence; and yet in the gravity of a Tyroler's face there is undoubtedly a cast of effeminacy; I have often wondered why it was there, and have only been satisfied that it was so. It is not owing to the round-leaved peake, hat, with its bouquet of artificial flowers, a eagle's feather; for though the women never take off their hats, —unless, they may do so at night,—the men seldom keep on theirs: the organ of veneration is so large, that their hats are as often off as on their heads, and thus any passer-by, especially a *gutig Frau*, has abundant opportunity of judging as to the effect of that appendage.

The female face among the Tyrolese has decidedly a less soft, I might say, less effeminate expression than the male. The inhabitants of the Zillerthal are reckoned the handsomest in the Tyrol: and their native manners, now unhappily wearing out everywhere except among our own Celts, are there the best preserved.

After our own home service was performed, Uncle and Aunt Patrick being parson and clerk, we wandered out on a pleasant mountain road, and there we met a splendid young shepherd in his holiday attire driving out his flock. He looked so bright in his green velveteen round jacket, red stockings, white clean linen plentifully displayed on his neck ; his peaked hat adorned with a bunch of feathers, and his handsome green leather belt embroidered in white, with the words, *Gott ist gut*—a beautiful motto for the mountain shepherd—God is good ! These belts almost always bear a religious motto; I believe universally so, and often one expressly taken from the bible.

The next morning the smart, grave-looking, and very erect *Kellnerinn*, or several of them rather, were drawn up in the passage with little bouquets of flowers. They presented one to each lady, and wished her “a good going out.” The lady took the bouquet, and presented a little silver; whereupon the whole establishment crowded out before the door, uttering the same parting salutation ; and our excellent host followed the carriages quite over the bridge, hat in hand, and swinging bows with it, wished us a good going out until we were out of sight.

The pass of Finstermünz, which we took on our way to Meran, is the grandest of the Alpine passes I have seen ; a mighty fissure in mountains nearly three hundred feet high, divided by the river Inn, which forces its way through the disjointed rocks, and is seen at times like a tossed fleck of foam down in its dark depths, when you gaze into the tremendous precipice.

The effect of the wildest and grandest part is heightened by a narrow bridge, the only causeway over the awful chasm between the overhanging rocks that nearly meet across it ; an old tower and gateway, under which we pass, remind us of the robber knights who had their stronghold in this bold defile ; and close by is a little inn for the refreshment of the traveller's body, and a little chapel for that of his soul.

The projecting cliffs, which hang overhead, are lined with great trunks of trees for the protection of the creatures who pass beneath them through this strange gallery.

Here, too, nature's enduring works are united with, but not so much as at other places contrasted by, the works of human art. The vast fortifications which Austria has erected in this formidable pass are on a scale commensurate with its aspect. The natural artillery of Hofer

and Haspinger will possibly not be again employed.

It was just in the spot on which we now stood, that, A.D. 1809, ten thousand French and Bavarians fell victims to that artillery; “’s ist Zeit” is still remembered in Tyrol. Sir Walter Scott says, as the invaders advanced up this pass, nothing was heard save the scream of the eagle. But romantic as this sounds, we may doubt whether even that cry were heard, or whether those who survived that awful day ever took cognizance of it. The Inn, however, we know, on its own authority, then, as now, swept on its hoarsely-roaring current, and as they marched in solemn order above it, the rocks over their heads held beings unseen by them; and, mingling with the voice of the tormented stream, the invaders heard the startling words sound along the heights above them, “Ist es Zeit?” and the answer, “Nein!” was returned along them.

“Is it time?” for what? They halted, and sent to their leader for orders; “*En avant,*”— and they went on steadily to death.

Just here, where the rocks gape but narrowly apart, the long-extended column were pressing on, when those strange, terrible words, which remind us of the old days of Jewish history, were distinctly and solemnly uttered,

“ In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, let all go.”

And down came the suspended avalanche; trees and rocks, held up till the fitting moment, were at once let go, and the living were hurled down into the torrent, and the dead buried beneath that fearful load.

Standing here, we feel this is

“ A fortress formed by Freedom’s hands ; ”

and thus fell the unjust invader before the mountaineers of Tyrol.

“ Fit spot to make the invaders rue,
The many fallen before the few ;
And here at last the scanty band
Of Irum’s last avengers stand ;
Here wait in silence like the dead,
And listen for the Moslem’s tread.”

But they succeeded ; and the religion which lent its peculiar spirit to their burning love of country, and of each other as parts of that country, has been but little taken into account in the usual notices of that wonderful defence of their land in which a monk was second in command.

Previous to this frightful destruction of the enemy, a Tyrolean sharp-shooter had been observed by the advanced guard, which was allowed to pass in safety, picking off as many

as he could from his station on an elevated rock.

Some Bavarians were sent to take or shoot him. He fired his last shot at one, and then throwing away his rifle, clasped the nearest soldier in his strong arms, and crying, “In God’s name!” sprung with him down the precipice.

And then we saw the great Orteler Spitz, and saw it to great advantage too. But I was thinking all the time of the Maladetta, on the Spanish side of the Pyrenees, and I do not know what made me want to draw a comparison where no likeness existed; but still I gave the preference to my first love, my fondly-remembered Port de Venasque, and its adjuncts, in the Pyrenees.

And then we came to Mals, and after spending a disagreeable night in a most crowded, disagreeable inn, we left the wonderful pass of the Stelvio, and drove under an arcade of vines, with rich young grapes hanging their clusters over our open carriage; there was a trellis carried completely across the public road, under which even the loaded diligence, or eilwagen, passed, and under this we approached to lovely Meran.

CHAPTER VII.

MERAN.

“WHAT a sweet place is Meran,” said Evelyn, as we sat together in the green balcony of our pretty, white Tyrolese cottage, shadowed by the fringy, drooping vines from the ardour of the sun, milder, but as warm as that of Italy, to which we had now very closely approached.

Yes, Meran is a sweet spot, and its inhabitants appear a favoured people. Like the rest of Tyrol, none are too poor, none too rich ; comfort and independence are the concomitants of labour ; the many do not toil in misery to heap up millions of gold for the few.

The valley of the Adige would seem to terminate here, for our view is backed by an amphitheatre of mountains ; yet we see the now placid stream, which a little further on has wrought such havoc among the rocks, wending its way with a countenance as fair and delusive as that of the smiling women in whose

heart are hidden the passions which jealousy or disappointment can raise to fury.

This is the garden of Tyrol. Before us, woody and vine-clad hills slope up from the cultivated vale, where small hamlets cluster peacefully each round its attendant spire of coloured wood ; and above them an old feudal castle still reminds their inhabitants of a time when there were lords of the soil in the land where now all people appear pretty equally to share and share alike in the produce of this portion of an earth, which was, perhaps, designed to give enough to each of its children if it were permitted to do so. In former times there was an old adage current, which latter years appear to have falsified,—“ God never made a mouth for which he did not make a mouthful.” But in Tyrol their inexperience leads them to believe it still.

Above all these feudal remains is the memorable Schloss Teriolis, which gave its name to the country and gave the country to Austria. Pocket-mouthed Meg, its last reigning and native princess, having, by her marriage, merged the independent sovereignty of Tyrol,—of which Meran was then the capital, and Schloss Teriolis the residence—into a province of ever-encroaching Austria.

"Yes, Meran is a sweet place," I repeated, as, after taking this little flight over it and its history, I folded my wings, and perching at Evelyn's side, looked in her sweet face, and began to consider how much more peaceful, less nervous and anxious it was now than it had been when we first entered Germany. • While musing on the cause of this improvement in my dear *protégée*, she spoke, and said,

"Mr. O'Donnell likes Meran more than any place he has been in as yet."

"Indeed!"

"I think it would do him good to stay quietly here for some time, he looks so ill, so melancholy; those dark eyes are so full of light, it is something fearfully beautiful; I fear this constant movement does him no good."

"You are interested in Mr. O'Donnell, Evelyn."

She threw me a quick, perhaps rather surprised, glance of interrogatory, as if she half understood, but did not expect the interpretation I was disposed to put on that interest. Her calm smile contradicted the suspicion.

"I am," she replied, "even deeply so; indeed, in one sense, I may say, I never have known any one who engaged my interest and

sympathy so much. I feel that his Beatrice will so bitterly regret him when he is dead."

"Yes, I am sure of that ; and his death, from all the circumstances he has hinted at, is not a very improbable occurrence. The texture of his beautiful mind is conformable to his bodily frame ; both suffer from the internal fire so easily acted upon. But where is this hard-hearted Beatrice to be found ? I could almost act the knight-errant on his behalf, if I knew that."

"She has gone on a walking expedition with Uncle Patrick," said Evelyn, sedately.

"What !" I cried, laughing at the blunder ; "I spoke of O'Donnell's Beatrice, you speak of Geraldine."

"Surely," she said, opening her large brown eyes with wonder, "surely you know they are the same ?"

"The same ! Impossible!"

"You actually have not discovered that ? not perceived it ; never understood poor Albert O'Donnell ?"

"Not the least in the world ! But, dear Evelyn, what a misfortune ! Poor young man ! he may well look as he does. But why did he not mention the reason of the refusal of Beatrice in that little memoir ?"

“ What do you mean now ? ”

“ Why did he not say that she could not marry him, because she was engaged to marry another, has been so almost all her life, at least I believe since she was about fifteen or sixteen ? I knew that all along, and it was that blinded me so completely. Can it be possible she has not told O’Donnell, or may have imagined he knew what almost all the rest of the world does know ? ”

“ I now recollect perfectly having met her intended husband in London, nearly ten years ago, nine at least. He was half a Creole, but a very fine-looking young man, about five years older than herself ; he had come from the Mauritius, of which, I believe, he was a native, and was to return there again until the time fixed for their marriage—seven or eight years, I think—should arrive. It was always understood that Geraldine was not at liberty ; and she wished it to be so, perhaps as a means of allowing her more real liberty than, as an elegant and highly intellectual girl, with the command of a rather large fortune, she could otherwise have possessed.”

“ How singular ! ” Evelyn rejoined ; “ you have excited my curiosity.”

“ A half-told tale usually does so, my dear.”

She looked down and sighed. The former expression of her countenance returned, and I said to myself that the improvement I had rejoiced at arose merely from the fact that her benevolent sympathies and tenderness of heart had latterly found an object which drew her off from personal concerns; that she had also been receiving letters from her priestly correspondent, which probably kept her mind tranquil, I knew. .

“And this is all, then, you know of Geraldine’s position?” she said.

“Nearly so. Her father was an officer without fortune, who died when she was a child. He had a step-mother, who had been a widow of the *ci-devant* Isle of France when she married his father, who was then a widower in reduced circumstances. The widow was very rich, and, unlike most ‘in-laws,’ she thought her money ought to go to her husband’s family. Her husband’s grand-daughter, Geraldine, was the only one of that family who remained; when left an orphan, she went to reside with her grandfather, and her step-grandmother bequeathed to her the entire of her property, on condition that the girl should marry the son of her younger sister, who, she considered, had also a just claim upon it. The old lady brought

her young nephew from the Mauritius, and it was only just before her death that the betrothal took place.

“At the death of her grandfather, Geraldine went to reside, I now recollect, in the house of a then well-known physician, the same, doubtless, alluded to by O’Donnell, who had been appointed her guardian. It is now some years since I used to meet her, and whether she continued to live there, or formed an establishment for herself, I do not know; but the fact of her engagement was, I believe, a very pleasant safeguard to her, and saved her from the tender assaults of fortune-hunters. I always understood that the proposed match quite agreed with the inclinations of the young people: but it is certainly slow in being accomplished.”

“Poor Albert O’Donnell!” sighed Evelyn. “How strange are the contrarieties of life! Hearts share in the inequalities of fortune: some are left pining, like his, for love; others, like hers, receive too much, and are made unhappy through the unhappiness of those from whom they take more than they want.

“How many a lonely heart would have felt all its uncalled-for warmth and fulness leap up to meet and mingle with such a one as his;

yet it lies at the feet of a woman who must leave it to wither, must trample over it in order to make herself happy ! Yet I do not believe," cried Evelyn, looking up with an energy that startled me, " I do not believe *that* is Geraldine's case ; bound she may be, legally or morally, but to love another, that she does not!"

" Evelyn," I cried reprovingly, " how can you pronounce that ? "

" Hearts read hearts," she answered, shaking her head very wisely. " Hers suffers too. Depend upon it, there is another heart often at your side which pants and throbs to pour itself out in some safe and wise channel ; a heart which may not have gone too far from the path of happiness to return to it again. Ah ! if we could save it ! save it from the downward gulf ! "

" What, Evelyn ! would not you be the last person to tempt any one to break a sacred engagement ? "

Evelyn shuddered.

" If an engagement be sacred," she said, " it must be maintained, not only at the price of one's own martyrdom, but at that of the martyrdom of the second self, the more dearly beloved. But is the engagement sacred ? that is all I long to know. Is it a matter which some

of the unjust judges of the world have decided upon; which some of its unjust doctrines may have regulated? Is it a partnership concern of money more than of affections? If so, let the self return to the mine it came from, but let not a noble spirit make itself the gnome."

Evelyn's luminous eyes flashed the instant; and then, the pure, noble-minded, happy-looking girl, that recalled the image of what she might have been when she stood indignantly before her secret lover in the hay-field only a little more than two years before, relapsed again into the pale and timid one which I had often seen.

I could not respond to her warmth, for, as the "nation of shopkeepers" say, "it was none of my business."

"It is very perplexing," I replied, "and I must say it is very hard upon me, who have never had anything to do with that most blind divinity myself, to be perpetually brought into the meshes he weaves for others. I am sure if Cupid were once married there would be an end to all his mischief-making. But they always keep him a boy, lest he should gain experience and make less work for novel-writers."

"Don't weep about it," said Evelyn, pitying my annoyed expression; "be assured that the

very reason you have been left free from the meshes yourself is that you may atone for Cupid's blindness and errors of youth, and see more clearly how to extricate others from his blunders."

" Well, there is something soothing in that. But, indeed, Evelyn, I do not see this case at present in the light you do. I think your interest in one of the parties may, perhaps, mislead you. That interest, too, has increased of late."

" You are suspicious still," she answered, smiling. " Yet I have been more interested by seeing the melancholy that is eating away poor O'Donnell's life than ever I was by his playful wit or elegant genius. But it was a conversation we had one evening sitting up on the Calvarienberg, just before we read his little memoir, which awakened the peculiar sort of interest I have ever since felt in his fate.

" The scene, naturally, gave it a religious direction. We spoke of the sublime mysteries of our holy faith. I found that I had accidentally touched a chord to which his full, unopened heart responded. Thoughts that had been weighing upon his mind burst forth, with a brightness, a vividness that dazzled me.

There was a freshness, an originality in the conceptions of Truth thus suddenly expressed by one who had had no human teacher, whose mind seemed to have gone on through a long dark gallery, guided only by the glimmering star of light which told him the fulness of day was beyond it. He had been seeking one pearl of great price, and the precious stones he picked up by the way, as indicators to his object, were to me as beautiful as they were rare.

" I cannot tell you with what delight I listened to what I felt was the first unfolding of a deeply religious and most elevated mind. Strange to say, while brought up among professedly, or what are called decidedly, religious people, it was only of late that Albert O'Donnell had ever read the Bible, except as a lesson or a task.

" We sat close by the Hermitage, on the top of that mountain ; and it was there that, breaking off in a manner not unusual, you know, with him, he uttered the emphatic words that penetrated my heart,

" ' To die without ever having been happy ! yes, that is all the gloom.'

" My answer was in Keble's words,

" ' Oft in life's stillest shade reclining,
In desolation unrepining,

'Meek souls there are who little deem
Their daily strife an angel's theme ;
Nor think the cross they take so calm
Shall prove in Heaven a martyr's palm.'

" He has since told me these beautiful words opened to him what he calls a new phase in religion, one that his expanding mind had not then taken in. He has been dwelling upon, and imbibing its holy, pure, retiring, and peaceable spirit; its grand and elevating principles, viewed, for the first time, apart from the sharp clangour of controversial discussion, the bustle of what are called religious pursuits, and the distinctive language of sect or party. The precepts of our faith, as well as its doctrines, have dwelt upon his mind and employed his understanding; the Redeemer's life of meek self-renunciation and active benevolence has impressed him with the holy beauty of its example."

" You open to me a new subject of curiosity, Evelyn. Why, if Geraldine be indeed his Beatrice, and if he thinks her rejection of him arose chiefly from horror at his presumed scepticism, why not now enlighten her with this new view of his opinions? It was only lately that, in speaking of these subjects, and of good Aunt Patrick's vehe-

ment zeal, she remarked that, on the contrary, she believed the nephew had deep, natural feelings of religion, but no settled opinions or creed."

"She is mistaken: and I can now understand why, in descending the Calvarienberg that evening, he led me, very evidently, to infer, though delicacy prevented him from saying so in words, that he wished the nature of our conversation not to be spoken of. I knew not why, yet understanding the value of discretion, I have never mentioned it even to you. But I have since observed that he shuns the subject with Geraldine, and in her presence evades it with me. He has also refrained from speaking thus to you, because, not having given you the hint he gave me, he might, conclude that you would naturally repeat the matter to her."

"But why this reserve?"

"Do you not see that one of his earliest prejudices was an abhorrence, not of barefaced hypocrisy only, but of anything that looks like a profession to serve a purpose,—the adaptation, if I may say so, of one's creed to one's circumstances; varying with the change of teachers, the change of friends, the change even of place; you may then guess his motives

in not revealing to Geraldine the change which I truly believe the grace of God has effected in his convictions of truth."

"I do guess them: his is indeed a noble and exalted mind, an utterly resigned and unselfish heart. But, Evelyn, in this you are bound by no promise, and Geraldine ought to know that the work she undoubtedly began, if she be truly his Beatrice, has been carried on, and will, I trust, be perfected."

"I long to speak to Geraldine," said Evelyn, "and I will do so this evening, when she has asked me to walk with her alone. You observe that of late she has contrived to divide our party, so that poor Albert is generally left out of hers."

"Yes," I replied; "since we left Munich, or since we stopped at the pass of Achen, Geraldine and Albert have been on different terms."

"Oh! it is on her side only," cried Evelyn; "and she is not acting a proper part by him."

"If so, you will do a good work by convincing her of it; but certainly, my dear, you look quite unadapted to be a mediatrix in a love affair."

Evelyn nodded her graceful head and said,
"Never mind looks, they are often bad in-

terpreters ;” and went from the balcony into the cottage.

Evelyn and Geraldine went together that evening to explore the beauties of Meran : there is what they term a convent of English ladies, that is, an early settlement of such, in the neighbourhood ; but I do not know that towards it their steps were directed. There are many other pleasant spots which might have appeared as apropos to Evelyn’s design.

I know nothing of what passed ; I am a firm believer in the national doctrine of our land, that people should “ mind their own business.” So, Aunt and Uncle Patrick, their nephew, and myself, severally appeared to do during our evening ramble. But when that individualized ramble was over, we all met together at tea, which, if a less regular sort of meal than one has at home, becomes, when travelling as we did, a much more important and exciting event, being entirely concocted, prepared, and exhibited by the exercise of our own foresight, and the steadfast determination of our own will.

While the spirit-lamp was lighting—for, where would you find a fire after four o’clock ?—the kettle boiling, the tea making, I observed that Geraldine, with painful consciousness, avoided

meeting the usual adjunct in such complicated affairs. Albert perceived this also, and the dark, clear paleness of his fine face was tinged with that burning hectic so painful to behold.

But the moon arose, and lighted up the sweet valley of Meran. We went out on the vine-canopied balcony, and leaned over the rail to watch the winding Adige grow silvery in the moonbeams. I stood beside Geraldine; but anxious to see better, I changed my place. In the uncertain light, she was not aware that I had done so, and had got round to the other side of Albert O'Donnell.

She laid her hand on one she believed was mine, but perhaps did not think at all, as pressing hers on that which lay on the same rail, she murmured,

“ Oh ! to dwell here, with only love for our portion in time, and perfection for our portion in eternity !”

And the hand on which hers was undesignedly laid, enclasped it. Geraldine started; lifted her deep, beautiful eyes to the too-glaring light of Albert O'Donnell's, and fled, without a word, from the balcony.

And he dropped down his head on that railing, and the moon looked down in calmness upon him.



It was night, stilly, bright, beautiful night ;
rosy, soft, and refreshing as the short, light
slumbers of happy youth.

My window was wide open ; I sat at it looking out at the garden-like vale, with its ruined castles, pretty cottages, and dark woods.

A tap came to my door, but it was not the gliding step of my fair Evelyn that came in. Geraldine appeared : she was partly undressed ; but her deep blue wrapper, and disarranged dark hair became such a face and figure more than the most finished toilette.

I saw she had been weeping, and that, with Geraldine, was a strange sight ; she was one exception to our Seer's beautiful description of womanly prerogative,—“ To laugh and cry without a reason, is one of the few privileges which we women have.”

She averted her classically-turned head as she advanced, as if looking for some lost object. Poor Geraldine ! with all her attempted “ strength of mind,” she was reduced to the ostrich-trick of hiding her own eyes in a bush, in order that no one might see her.

I neither offered her a helping hand, nor put an obstacle in her way, but left her to make it out as she pleased ; and so, after a few unusually embarrassed words, the truth

came out, and she reached her point. Evelyn had spoken to her of a little memorandum of Mr. O'Donnell's; she was restless, and the heat prevented her from sleeping; if it was not a secret, would I lend it to her?

A moment's reflection showed me the propriety of an assent; Albert had intrusted that little sketchy narrative to me, with an injunction, in case of his death, to deliver it to her. Yet not even that circumstance had enlightened me as to the fact of her being his Beatrice; so completely had every word and look been guarded on his part, from the moment she complied with what was then deemed his dying request.

"We," I said, "are comparatively strangers to Mr. O'Donnell; I act without his permission certainly, but I am willing to bear the responsibility, for there is nothing here but what you, or the whole world, might read; it is a very simple narrative, and wholly unadorned."

"Thank you," Geraldine rather eagerly said, and taking the little roll, instantly disappeared.

I do like a French breakfast; a cup of coffee, almost as the eyelids unclose; then a walk, or some *passe-tems*, and then a delicious *déjeuner à la fourchette*, with its fruits and flowers, and all other agreeable things. A common German

breakfast is quite another sort of affair ; but though German coffee, late or early, is seldom good, it made its appearance every morning in my chamber ; and then, for society had not yet spoiled me for solitude, I took a lonely ramble in the pleasant environs of our cottage adjacent to the town, or village of Meran.

But the morning that followed the delivery of Albert's manuscript I was deprived of my morning walk. Geraldine followed the pretty Mädchen who brought my coffee, and all that followed this inroad on my "regular habits" quite put every-day matters out of my head.

She brought back the little manuscript, and laying it on the table, looked as if she ought, but did not like, then to retire. Geraldine was still wrapped in the loose robe of bright, but deep blue she had worn the night before ; her dark hair was partly loosened from its full and glossy bands ; I thought she looked quite beautiful, for the sensibility which her countenance sometimes was deficient in, through the force of that strong self-control which habitually repressed her emotions, was now expressed in its lineaments, and blending with its high intellectuality, gave it an expression of touching loveliness. A slight excitement in those deep eyes, which were sometimes iron grey, some-

times blue, and sometimes black, according to the light they were viewed in, or the mental emotions they expressed, and a deeper flush on her smooth, healthy, oval-shaped cheek, made me suspect that Geraldine had not gone to repose since I had seen her before.

Having laid the paper on the table, she looked out of the open window, admired the prospect, and expressed the regret with which she should leave Meran.

Had she decided on her movements, I asked.

No; she wished to consult me before doing so. .

"It is one of the misfortunes," she said, forcing a smile, and trying to speak in a tone of pleasantry, "that 'clever people' are doomed to, that no one will help us out of a difficulty, or believe it possible we can be in want of a little of that wholesale article commonly called 'good advice.' We would catch at it as eagerly as they say a drowning man does at a straw, yet no one will have the presumption to throw it in our way. I wish now that you, who, I dare say, have often sympathized with me in this complaint, and felt yourself the weakest and most dependent of human creatures, because every one said and thought you

EVELYN.

were the strongest and most independent—
wish you would just tell me what I ought to
do."

"I will willingly give you the straw of advice
you fancy you require," I answered, but thinking,
at the same time, how differently Evelyn
would have made the same appeal; how her
tearful eyes would have penetrated my soul
with their loving hopelessness; how her words,
mystical indeed, yet full of tenderness and
feminine devotedness, would have softened
while they bewildered me. And when at last
the usual conclusion, that no one could advise
her was arrived at, how her soft hair would
float over my shoulder, and her face be buried
beneath it, as she clung to me in the terrified
helplessness of a frightened child.

Geraldine was another creature; and the
strong curb-rein with which she held in the
emotions of her mind, and even the affections
of her heart, suffering neither to run off with
her sound judgment and sense of right, was
never so clearly seen as now. The mastery she
had over herself was more visible when that
heart was quivering with all that makes women
weak.

"Do so, then," said Geraldine, seating herself
in the window near to me, "for I am very

anxious, and it is such a comfort, such a relief, to be told simply what we *ought* to do."

"I quite agree with you, if we are at the same time obliged to do it; but otherwise, I greatly fear such perverse creatures as we are would do directly the reverse; and therefore the advice or command should be dictated on that supposition."

"Well, but if one woman, knowing a woman's mind, gives the counsel, this crooked proceeding may be avoided," she said, smiling now *de bon cœur*; "at all events, you can give me two pieces of advice, contrary, if you will, one to the other, and leave me to follow whichever my perverse will adopts. For instance, you have read that paper; Evelyn has divined the truth; you have long known the particulars of my position"—

"And therefore I can give two bits of opposite advice, and leave you to follow either of them, in perfect confidence that one or the other will be just as useful as the straw to the drowning man. Well, Geraldine, here they are, all jesting at an end:

"No. 1. Separate Mr. Albert O'Donnell from your society.

"No. 2. Or marry him."

Geraldine started at the last piece of advice.

She sat silent some moments, as if endeavouring to subdue emotion.

“ I can follow the first,” she said then; “ I cannot, must not, listen to the last. But I see that you know what has brought me to you, and the species of advice I want from you, although you have not, as you may think, exactly hit upon it. The truth is, your sweet Evelyn has plunged me into doubt from which I was before free. She is a strange girl; she appears so timid, almost childish, in her simplicity; but what a depth of mind when it unfolds itself! How strangely, how prophet-like, her heart speaks to another’s.”

“ You surprise me,” I said; “ Evelyn has appeared to me a merely gentle, loving girl, without pretension to talent or genius; naturally formed to look lovely in her own niche in life, to minister and to be ministered to, to love and be loved. Such a creature should I have pronounced her, nothing more.”

“ Nothing more!” said Geraldine, thoughtfully. “ Well, I believe hers is a character which could only be fully developed in trial. Where her sympathies are engaged, she is almost more than you describe, although, without intending it, you have taken in, perhaps, all that could constitute perfection in woman.

But she appears to me what I could fancy a ransomed spirit of earth to be, returned here to point a struggling one to the path of peace and happiness,—the path it should pursue; to free its powers, unveil its errors, direct its present, and show its future destiny.”

“ My dear Geraldine,” I exclaimed, “ this exaltation of yours must be lowered, I fear. In the sweet girl, who daily becomes dearer to me, I merely see a human being who has lived and suffered much in few years, and who, by her own experience, would urge others to seize upon the fleeting happiness which Providence has placed in their path, or lead them to shun the sorrow which has blighted her young days.”

“ You express nearly what I meant,” she replied; “ the experience of the heart, when spoken, always sounds prophetic. That Evelyn, too, has suffered, is evident; there is something in her young, innocent countenance which tells you that between her and her fellows there is already a great gulf fixed. But then there is an elevated holiness of spirit, a reaching above earth, a power of self-sacrifice, which represents her character to me as a reproduction of one of those Christians of earlier times, who would expire in multiplied tortures rather than cast a grain of incense on the altar of Cæsar or Jove;

and yet thought appears to have been her only teacher."

"Yes, for the heart teaches itself," I rejoined; "but we make the world its schoolmaster, and overrule its lessons. But what has this to say to the advice I am to give you, if that is not all included in my two aforesaid propositions?"

A slight backward movement of her graceful head, as an accompaniment to a mental decision one way or other, was habitual with Geraldine; and this "trick of the manner" seemed to bring upon her open brow that emanation from the soul, which, in itself, appears to me a proof of its divinity. Her short silence ended now with this decision:

"You are aware," she said, "that Beatrice and Geraldine are one. How much exaggerated is the beautiful description, you can judge; but that does not alter the case to him who drew it: things are to us as we see them. The first emotion I felt on receiving his abrupt and passionate declaration was anger at his presumption. I know not what others arose in a cooler moment; but I believe that that anger was turned against myself. I was conscious I had acted an unwise, if not a wrong part in permitting an intercourse so unrestrained, and

that I had visited on him the punishment due to myself. He had believed my lot in life to be as poor, or uncertain, as his own.

“ From a very early age,” said Geraldine, smiling, “ moral philosophy had been my darling study; but that more peculiar branch which generally attracts the thoughts of women, the heart and affections, had never occasioned me either reflection or disturbance. Always brought up with the idea that the grand object of most women’s expectations, marriage, was a settled event in my own case, I had felt a perfect indifference on the subject; and my mind being so much given to intellectual pursuits, I had, until I met with Albert O’Donnell, never even thought of love as its preliminary. I was no novel reader, and if I had a heart capable of being awakened, certainly it must have been in the state of the Sleeping Beauty who awaited the approach of the fated prince.

“ Strange to say, it was only at Achen I made this discovery.

“ During the long time that intervened between our violent separation at the Irish cottage, and our melancholy meeting in the London lodging, my thoughts had often turned with regret to poor Albert O’Donnell; I dwelt on the recollection of those delightful hours we

had spent together; that flow of intellectual, animated, varied discourse ; his almost universal intelligence ; his warm, excitable disposition, self-renouncing spirit, tender feelings, vivid genius, and lofty aspirations ; and I asked myself, were they doomed for ever to be crushed ? and doubted whether I might not have already crushed them.

“ Then came the news that he was dying ; dying, alone, neglected, miserable ; the most cold-blooded murderer has seldom felt the pangs of remorse more keenly than I did then.

“ You know how my good old guardian and myself found him. Poor Albert did not imagine that I saw his ‘ Childhood’s Aid,’ his guardian angel ; but I did so, and when I looked at the portrait on the canvas, and at the original in my heart, I shuddered at the contrast : yet his tears of grateful affection were bathing my hands, while remorse and anguish tormented my soul.

“ I withdrew to kneel before God, and implore his mercy to spare that life long enough to enable me to make some atonement. I asked the mercy for myself, not for him, to save me from the sense of crime.

“ To do what I could for him during the little time that might be left for me to do so,

was thenceforth my only earthly thought; to be made the means, by God's grace, of leading him to the hope of a happier life than I had blighted here, was the highest favour I could ask from Heaven.

"But I closed tighter round me the clasps of the iron armour, with which he once reproached me for investing my heart. I did not by a single chink suffer him to perceive the devotion, the intensity of feeling it enveloped. Still he thought me calm, and cold, and self-restrained as ever.

"I had been acquainted with Aunt Patrick at Limerick; I wrote for her to come to him. Law, the bane of what is called lawless Ireland, had separated the brothers, but my appeal on behalf of the nephew was effectual. This tour, as I believe a last chance, was proposed to Albert. I had abundant means of accomplishing it for the entire party, but no notion of forming one of the number. It was then that the passionate supplication was made which closes his brief memoir," Geraldine concluded, averting her tearful eyes, "did not give way, and yet I am here."

"But some change took place between you both since we left Munich?" I observed.

"That change," said Geraldine, "arose"—

she paused, coloured deeply, and then grew pale —“ from becoming conscious—No ; I cannot even to myself admit it !”—

“ That Albert O'Donnell was the fated prince who alone could penetrate the enchanted wood, and arouse the sleeping heart !” I exclaimed.

So long a silence followed, that I feared she was offended.

“ That supposition,” she said at last, “ you must allow me to leave unanswered. But up to that day the tacit agreement we had made to appear, at least, to forget that any thought of love had ever passed between us, had never been broken. You may remember that at Munich I received a letter two months after the regular time: it had followed me, from place to place. That letter was from the Mauritius, from my betrothed ; he had three several times postponed, on grounds quite satisfactory to me, the time of our marriage. It was therefore with great surprise, and no little pain, that I read a letter, certainly couched in a different style to any of his others. It required, rather than asked me, to fix that time immediately. It stated that the writer could only come to England to celebrate it, and must return with me directly to the Mauritius.

This was a new aspect of my married life, for I had never contemplated even a visit to that island, much less a residence there. My fortune, you know, is considerable, and I believe his successful speculations have rendered him independent. But not even the idea of exile from my country and friends could warrant me in breaking an engagement which would have the effect of depriving that man of the fortune that had come from his family. The business-like tone of that letter sickened me. It was altogether so different from any I had got from him, that I almost suspected he wished to alarm me, and make me withdraw the pledge of my youth.

“ For the first time in its half-dormant existence my heart spoke in its own behalf: but I ordered it to be still, and despatched from Munich my reply, telling him his betrothed left all arrangements in his own hands; his own convenience or wishes could determine time and place; that I should soon return to London, where, on his arrival, he would find me at my late guardian’s house, prepared dutifully to attend him back to the Mauritius as his obedient wife.

“ That strange place at Achen, where we soon afterwards arrived, broke down some of

the restraints that had existed among us. You know how wildly poor O'Donnell's spirits rose ; there was a gleam of that beautiful wildfire which is indigenous to his unhappy country, and in his case I fear destructive to the sheath that encloses it ; but it was in an unguarded moment that the still more fatal flame, which to my remorse I had kindled, broke forth ; I then, to my horror, discovered it to burn more brightly than ever within his heart.

“ Until then, I believed that affection and respect for me were strong as before, but that the passion, which it is said cannot live without hope, was extinct. I found it was not ; its depth, its warmth, and unchangeableness, were suddenly revealed to me, and while I trembled at it on his account, it was—yes, though I had sent off my letter, and my resolution stood firm as ever—it was precious to me on my own.”

Geraldine uttered this concluding sentence with rapidity, and an excitement that seldom distinguished her manner, for a moment covering her face with both hands, to hide the glow of shame that flushed it.

“ And you will go to London and keep your engagement, Geraldine ?”

“ Yes ; it is my duty to do so.”

“ Few men,” I said, “ ever really thank the

woman who marries merely from duty ; and I believe few women, except in books, have ever done so without having had cause to regret a step which has bound two hearts in a bondage of all others the most deplorable. An immediate marriage, under such circumstances as yours, appears to be a very hazardous step. Ought not your intended, whom, pardon me, you appear to marry because you are obliged to endow him with your fortune, ought he not to reside one year at least in the same land with you previous to taking each other for better for worse ? And if your own heart is then sensible that it has broken the engagement of your lips, would it not be better to give him the fortune only ? ”

“ That is a compromise,” Geraldine rather proudly interrupted, “ which I hope he would not accept ; and if I believed him to be a man to whom it might be even proposed, I certainly should consider myself justified in refusing to fulfil a promise made in ignorance.

“ But suppose I did renounce my fortune, what good could that do Albert O’Donnell ? I could not then be his wife, and I should deprive myself of the means of forwarding the career, on which I feel assured, if his life be spared, he will enter : or, if one of languishment be

appointed to him, I can afford him the means of soothing it."

"That is all true; but perhaps even the poor wife would do him more good than the rich friend."

"You are mistaken. A poor wife would render Albert O'Donnell as wretched as herself. Their very love and tenderness for each would constitute their misery. His mind is, unhappily, attuned to the elegancies and refinements of life. In the abject circumstances of a distressed family he would continue to pine in misery and obscurity. The appalling fate of an unfortunate English artist might be his. Alone, and undepressed by solicitude for beings he loved, he would, I believe, rise through all the dreary difficulties which such a one has to contend with; but encompassed by affection and its cares, his energy would be lost, and his ruin certain. In England more especially, it is almost impossible ever to rise from obscurity without 'some capital to begin with,' because talent and genius meet with little assistance in their earlier efforts.

"From the want of that assistance, he has already deeply suffered, and I should ill repay his devotion to me by checking his aspiring nature, and surrounding him with the cares and vexations of a poor man's family."

“ You have very good sense, Geraldine, I am told, so on this point I will say no more. Towards Albert O'Donnell you have, I think, acted in a noble manner, one worthy of a noble heart, which, if it commits an error, fears not to atone for it. You know these beautiful words, ‘ The soul really grand is only tested in its errors. As we know the true might of the intellect by the rich resources and patient strength with which it redeems a failure, so do we prove the elevation of the soul by its courageous return into light; its instinctive rebound into higher air, after some error that has darkened its vision or soiled its plumes.’ ”

“ But, my friend, the actings of a noble, and great, and good heart, do not always exactly run in the boundaries of that little channel which the people of the world have named propriety. Now you know, quite as well as I do, that as long as you keep, so far as opinion, not actual fact, is concerned, in the middle of that channel, whatever you do, or do not do, is right; but if you are imagined to step the least bit to one side, to perform the greatest and best action the world ever witnessed, every eye will be fixed on the step, and every tongue talk of it; but the action will either be unexamined, or considered to be a very dubious one.”

" Well," said Geraldine, looking a little alarmed, " I surely have not done anything contrary to propriety in accompanying Aunt and Uncle Patrick and their apparently dying nephew on a short tour? I made a steadfast promise in my own heart, that if he died I would fulfil his request, and myself close his eyes; but I as steadily resolved, that if he recovered, though I would still watch over his interests, I would never see him more."

" I am far from imagining," I said, " that any persons could be so low and base in feeling or judgment as to interpret you wrongfully, or calumniate your conduct. But you are in a rather prominent, as well as difficult position; and in a sphere where evil-speaking is scarcely thought a sin, one is obliged to consult expediency, at the loss of much that is pleasant, and good, and useful. O'Donnell is now recovered, and I refer you again to either of my two propositions."

" I feel we ought to separate; but I fear to pain him."

" Have you told him of the letter you had at Munich, and of your approaching marriage?"

" Dear, no! I have never even told him of my engagement."

I sprung from my seat.

" You look astonished. But at first my rejection of his suit was too hasty, I may say too angry, to permit me to think of such a palliative of its severity, and since then I have so dreaded to bring on any renewal of that scene,—I feared to excite him. I was in hopes that you might accidentally name it; for he might think I did not believe that he had renounced his hopes."

" Geraldine, tell him at once, and then separate him from your society; for your own sake and his, it is the wisest and kindest plan."

" Are you ever coming to breakfast?" asked Evelyn beneath the window. She stood there with the unconscious subject of our discussions.

" Go down," cried Geraldine; " say the truth, that I have not slept, and will breakfast in my room."

Geraldine flew away while speaking.

Evelyn's, I said to myself, as I looked down on the beautifully youthful pair on the green beneath the window, Evelyn's is surely a more kindred spirit to his. How charming they look there; the one so dark, the other so radiantly fair. Yet how much deeper is the love he feels for Geraldine than any that Evelyn

could inspire him with ! Its intensity is deepened by veneration. Her strong mind controls his impetuous, yet tender one ; her intellect chastens and directs the fire of his genius. She commands his whole being ; he loves her with the mind as well as the heart. Yet to us she appears almost cold. What a clatter they make for breakfast ! “ I am coming.”

CHAPTER VIII.

—
TRIESTE. VENICE.

WE are here alone—yes, though three in number, we are alone—for Albert O'Donnell and good Uncle and Aunt Patrick are gone! Dear, precious soul, how I miss her, with all her innocent horrors. Well, she is gone, and I believe verily we have been weeping; I think so. Was it the loss of my dear Aunt Patrick, or the detail of the following scene, drew forth these tears? I do not know; one followed the other so rapidly; and when one is nervously inclined, the sensations become confused, at least we cannot trace them to their lawful causes. *Par exemple*, I will relate what passed in the Schloss Teriolis the very day before the departure of Uncle and Aunt Patrick and their nephew. After that, they went one way and we another; they went straight to Verona; we came a rigmarole route, which I advise no creature to adopt, through Carniola.

Carinthia, and Istria, till at last we reached Trieste.

Well, for the tale, and its results.

The evening that followed the morning when, as aforesaid, I lost my walk, and others nearly lost their breakfast, simply in consequence of two persons having lost their hearts, Geraldine and Albert came out with us *en masse*, for an excursion to the Castle of Tyrol. Without any great difficulty, the peculiar pair managed to get away from the general group, and were sitting *tête-à-tête* in one of the deep windows of that ancient Schloss, while we were unconcernedly perambulating the grounds.*

There was a sadness and a tenderness in Geraldine's face all day, and a depth of feeling in her deep, thoughtful eyes, which prepared the palpitating heart of her too-devoted lover for what was coming. *

His mind, as to his own lot, was made up : he believed, with the melancholy faith which perhaps his country, his physical constitution, and the moral effect of his early life, had induced, that, in the words of one of his countrymen,

“ For him was neither living hope,
Nor loving heart, allotted ;
Joy had but drawn his horoscope,
For sorrow's hand to blot it.”

And so he sat calmly beside her he loved, but his face was deadly pale.

“Albert,” said Geraldine, without preamble, “you asked to die with me, and I granted the request ; you asked me to lead your soul to light, and I replied that the spirit of God only could do that : but the voice of both our hearts has been heard, and that blessed work is done. I made to myself a steadfast vow, that come what might, I would perform the other request, and lay my own hand on your closing eyes if you were called to die.

“When I yielded to your prayer, and came with you and your friends, I said, ‘If he dies, I will be with him ; if he lives, I must see him no more.’ Albert, the will of God has not accorded with the opinions of men ; you live, will live, and”—

“And you must see me no more,” he interrupted, seeing her hesitation. “Be it so ! Well and nobly would you have performed the first part of the vow ; nobly and well will you act in adhering to the second.”

“The latter has been no vow, Albert ; it has been tantamount to it ; the deliberate purpose of what I consider a right principle.”

“I had no other hope than this,” he answered.

"No other hope!" she repeated, involuntarily; and grew pale.

"No other hope!" he reiterated; "if you had said no other wish"—

"Hush!" cried Geraldine, for his eyes, so full of that dark light that thrilled the very heart, were lifted up to hers.

"Albert, cease! I have forborne, perhaps wrongfully, to tell you until now, that I have long, for many years even, been the betrothed of another man."

It was strange to see the effect of this communication on Albert's too-emotional countenance. At first there was surprise, doubt, interrogatory, expressed upon it; but all these passed into a deep, reverential expression of fervent love.

He took her hand, devoutly but calmly pressed it to his lips, and murmured over it, "Thank Heaven for this!"

They were twin souls these two, or else the interpreter of each was one—love. Geraldine understood the source of his gratitude.

"I have forborne to tell you this, my friend, because I feared that—that had you known the existence of an engagement, formed almost in my childhood, you would have imagined that, had it not existed, I could have"—Geraldine stopped, and looked really distressed.

"Even so," he murmured, in a tone so low and thrilling it seemed to issue from the soul rather than the lips: "Even so; leave me then that soothing balm; leave me, till these wasting pulses cease, to believe in your sympathy, to fancy there might have been some unison in our souls; to feel that I was not despised."

"Despised! oh, Albert, you! in whose presence I always felt as in that of my master-spirit—you despised!"

"Well, let that pass; leave me, it will not injure you, or another; leave me to enjoy the blessed, blessed relief, of thinking that Geraldine, Beatrice, might have been even more than my guardian angel, my all, if she had not been given to another. I ask no more, not even a word. Now let us part, this moment, when you will, for ever! Ah! who can tell that even already you have not been compromised by me!"

It was well he added this last sentence, for Geraldine was fast sinking into weakness. A few words more or less have often decided a destiny; and this latter clause, bringing the world and her own position before her, saved her from giving way to her feelings, saved her from the reproach such a yielding would have involved.

"I do not fear that," she said calmly; "the whole truth shall be told when there is an opportunity. Meantime we must part, Albert, part as friends who have no hope of a union in time, but who have laid up hopes for eternity. A glorious career may yet be before you. Pursue it; rise above the disappointment of one hope."

"Hah!"

"Yes, you think now it includes all hopes. Not so. A life of action is the best for you; in study, in composition, in a life wholly devoted to the poetry of art, you feed the lovely but unhealthy flame which devours you, and which, if not wisely governed and directed, will prove but a false and fatal glare, expiring in its own wild rapidity, and leaving you but dust and ashes as its results. In the healthful counteraction of a life of activity and benevolence seek at once its counterpoise and its object.

"Was it not the unfortunate poet of modern Italy, Leopardi, who said that no man is by nature created for study; no man is born to write, to compose, but to act; that all great writers, or poets, were intensely disposed to *do* great things; but their times or their fate forbidding this, they ~~wrote~~ great things; that only those who are capable of greatness in action, are capable of greatness in thought or in writing?"

" This appears to me not quite true ; but the dreamy and unhealthful literature that has emanated from the dreamy students of Germany, wholly given up to speculations which the wholesomeness of an active life is not allowed to interrupt, has already produced evil effect enough on that of England.

" Avoid that path ; go out into the world, Albert, and exert your talents and your energies, for the benefit of the present race of men, while you pursue the works which may cause your name to be remembered by those which follow.

" There is a great want of such persons at home ; men who, without what is called agitation, without clamour, without virulence, would tend to show their country its real state ; to alarm 'the selfishness which, at the present moment, causes both the wealth, the greatness, and the deplorable wretchedness of England, and makes it truly the wonder of all lands.'

I fear I should get out of my depth if I were to follow out this part of the discourse ; and what would be the use of it ? The columns of "The Times" reveal the state of England to the whole civilised world. They reveal one redeeming phase in the fearful anomaly of London life ; they show that its

magistrates are the free and worthy judges of the poor, the neglected, and the oppressed.

* * * * *

And the next morning our pleasant party separated into two equal divisions; whereof Geraldine, Evelyn, and myself formed one, and Uncle and Aunt Patrick and their nephew the other; which latter departed, as aforesaid, for Verona.

While Uncle Pat was assisting in the last packing arrangements of the carriage, and Albert was standing, flushed to crimson, beside Geraldine, who, pale as death, was looking on with him at the manœuvres, good, dear, loving Aunt Pat stole a race back to Evelyn and me, who were condemned to appear as mere nugatory personages, and, giving us a hearty kiss apiece, whispered,

"Don't fret, dears; don't now, like good creatures; we'll see each other again; see if we don't! For, take my honest word for it," she added, holding her hand between her face and the pair at the door who were so intently engaged with the packing, but at the same time indicating her reference to them by a certain motion of the eye, "take my honest word for it, as sure as two and two make four, those two will be made one yet."

Then bursting into a torrent of grief, which

effectually did away with our inclination to smile, she hugged us one after the other, in her arms, almost sobbing,

“ I loved you ! I loved every one of you, though you have got new-fangled notions, and want to have churches without pews, and coffee without cream ! But, my dear creatures, now I must leave you ; take care of yourselves, and don’t turn Papists, and go and serve idols.”

And with another loving kiss, the dear, good soul departed, holding up both hands with a seesaw motion, as if indicating the ups and downs of this strange world, until away went the carriage out of sight, and with it Geraldine vanished from ours for the rest of the day.

And so they are gone ; and we look in each other’s faces, and no one seems satisfied at the event, yet no one says so ; on the contrary, we all know, feel, and say, that it was a highly proper one.

There is no text, I believe, more frequently and freely quoted than this, “ It is not good that the man should be alone ;” and I never recollect hearing it quoted when the definite article, which limits the assertion to “ the man,” was not omitted.

Now, my only reason for making this critical

observation, which does not proceed from a cavilling spirit, is, that it appears to me, that women, who, Matthew Henry says, are “dust double refined,” must be doubly obedient to that decision. How else does it happen that they are so much more agreeable in what is, veritably, a mixed society, than when in a spinster coterie? I only know the fact, but cannot otherwise explain it. *Ipse dixit* is women’s motto.

But that fact may be considered as proved when I affirm, that we, three single sisters, were not half so pleasant nor so pleasing, when Uncle Pat and Nephew Albert had left us to ourselves.

I am only relating the accidents of travel, not the intricacies of a novel-plot. Not one mistake, misunderstanding, or neglected explanation, divided Albert from Geraldine; and though they had parted, just at the time when, in the secret and whispered opinion of Evelyn and myself, their hearts had met, still it was from no blunder on either side; they separated with a stronger faith than ever in the virtues and beauties of each other’s characters, and a steadfast conviction that their separation was the wisest, safest, and discreetest course. There was nothing in the

least romantic or out-of-the way in the whole affair. It was all done with due regard to propriety.

And now we are winding down and down the corkscrew descent that conducts us to the free town of Trieste, with the blue Adriatic before us, and the flags of many nations spread out on the breezes; down and down, but round and round, and never it seems coming nearer, until in despair we give up reaching the long visible, but still unapproachable town, and then, suddenly, we are arrived; and the men of many lands are now around us; and we enter its very mathematically-planned streets, all at right angles, all uniform, and looking like what Trieste is, a mart of nations, where all tribes of men meet, like the diversified creatures of a menagerie; where you hear the sweet Italian, the rough German, the barbarous Selavonian, the modern Greek, the emphatic French, the familiar voice of home; all tongues and all dialects pass around you. You are surrounded by Greeks, go to their fine church, and hear the splendid music, and witness the gorgeous ceremonies.

And when you walk through its streets, you see that commerce has raised Trieste into a famous town, and yet that the rich have not

swallowed up the food of the poor. There is no “cry in its streets,” and Aunt Patrick would have assured us that the coroner of Trieste had not half so much to do in holding inquests on the starved to death as in some other great and noble towns.

And now we have to look for St. Antony’s pair of pigs, which would have excited the dear woman’s indignation, since, in honour of the Popish saint, they are allowed, by a perpetual law of the ancients of Trieste, to wander freely up and down its streets, belonging to no one, and owning no authority, but, like the Polish exiles, supported on the civil list of the place they reside in.

And then we come upon the busy and open quay, and hear our language spoken by a man who has made a voyage to America, and speaks English, and likes to show the English attention. He shows us especially the great tall tower, for there is only one in this spireless town; the buildings are all low and square, so that the fire from the fort, in case of invasion, may sweep over them to the sea.

One tower, our English-speaking friend points out to us, and says, “There is a man up there, and he is red, and has a sword, like your red men in England. He is there day and

night; and what do you think he is there to do? To blow the fire: there can no fire be blown, but he must blow it."

And thus he described to us, in English, the German fire-watch, whose office it is to give the alarm by blowing a horn in case of a fire in the town.

And so, without a regret we leave the Prince Metternich, that enormous and most excellently-named hotel, and in the cool of the evening go on board the nicely-equipped steam-packet, and move away towards long-wished-for Venice.

The night is breathless, soft, and warm; rolled in a cloak on the cushioned bench, with a pile of cushions at my head, I recline all through that night, fearful of not catching the first glimpse of the once proud bride, as she rises in the blushing morn from her bed of waters.

There! short, bright, and glowing, is that night ended; and there, already, is the silvery hue stealing over the deep vault of heaven. There comes on the crimson flush; and there breaks forth the piercing golden-eyed beam.

And now, up springing with the new-born rays, up from the same ocean-bed, rise the towers, and domes, and spires of wonderful

EVELYN.

Venice ! I saw them thus in the fresh, glittering, half-risen sun, growing up out of the sea, and seeming to grow higher and higher ; and, strange effect of a sight I had longed for but never before beheld, I laughed. Cowper says he danced with joy on reading Milton when a boy ; but it was not joy made me laugh. I do not know what it was. The vision of that morning was unlike anything my fancy had ever imagined. The result was caused by the strangeness of the sensations it produced ; excessive mental agony will sometimes produce a laugh.

The full horror of approaching Venice, especially for the first time, by that modern invention called a railroad, was quite intelligible to me now ; but still some little peculiar favour was, I think, awarded to me, when I was thus permitted, in sheer ignorance, to see it for the first time rising out of the waters in the earliest beams of a bright summer sun.

How are the mighty fallen ! Venice, proud Venice ! thou art become a mere modern thing. A railroad approaches thy streets, where horses and carriages are unknown, and an omnibus-gondola floats on thy Grand Canal.

But we are in our floating equipage, and

move away to our great, strange-looking hotel on that same canal.

Beautiful Venice! thy beauty has nigh passed away : thy romance-life has ended : thy gondolas are as matter-of-fact as thy railroad ; an English traveller at my side calls them “a rum concern,” and avers it is a shame for thee not “to whitewash up the old palaces a bit.”

And we venerate not thine age, for thou hast fallen from thy first estate. Thou art free no more ; and thy sons, as they row the strangers over thy waters, fear to name *i Tedeschi*, lest a bird of the air should carry the tale, or that which hath wings should tell the matter. The strong heel of a vast consolidated power is pressed upon thy heart ; but that heart is now heaving beneath it ; its life is returning, and at this moment who can tell what may not be on the morrow ?*

“An emperor tramples where an emperor knelt ;”†

* Written at Venice shortly before the outbreak of the European revolution.

† The spot where Frederic Barbarossa knelt, A.D. 1177, in submission to Pope Alexander, in St. Mark’s, is commemorated by a piece of brass let into the marble floor of the vestibule.

In that struggle against a foreign power, “Alexander,”

and, like captive Judah, refusing to sing the song of Zion by the waters of Babylon, Venice has hushed the songs of Tasso ; and her gondolieri pull her hearse-like gondolas in silence over the canals that look as dreary and torpid and weed-choked as her own spirit.

Venice owed her water-birth to an abhorrence of slavery : refugees from the tyranny of earth planted their asylum in the sea. They tell us now she ought to live happy, and at peace, under the wise, able, and tolerant government to which the wisdom and will of other nations assigned her, although that government be brought from a distinctly separated land, with which an Italian heart can have no sympathy.

But the man who leads us through the water-streets of Venice—which are but sedge-choked, pestiferous pools—would, if he dared, tell quite a different tale ; tell that the grating of the chain is more and more deeply felt, that a thirst for freedom is parching even the heart beside us. That the great, old, faded relics of the past do not make them wish to resuscitate

Lord Byron said, “ had reason to thank the Almighty, who enabled a feeble old man to subdue a terrible and potent sovereign.”

In the nineteenth century matters have become different.

a glory which wears now the tarnish of the age it sprang from, and of the patrician tyranny which ruled the grand republic: but still are the words that bewailed the fate of Venice as true as when they were uttered :

“ Statues of glass—all shivered—the long file
 Of her dead doges are declined to dust ;
But where they dwelt, the vast and sumptuous pile
 Bespeaks the pageant of their splendid trust.
Their sceptre broken, and their sword in rust,
 Have yielded to the stranger ; empty halls,
Thin streets, and foreign aspects, such as must
 Too oft remind her who, and what enthralled,
 Have flung a desolate cloud o'er Venice' lovely walls.”

Nor yet; patricians of old Venice, would we mourn your ‘erl, nor lament the abolition of the fatal Council of the republican bride of the sea. Strange, that for a mite of silver men will display and detail the frightful records of their country’s vice, and tyranny, and crime ! Here are a group of wondering, laughing, idle wanderers from Great Britain, ransacking thy dungeons, and peeping into thy lion’s mouth ; and they hear from their guide how, by means of the latter, the secret denouncement, or false accusation, was transmitted to ‘thy dreadful Council of Ten ; and there in the former they see, with wondering eyes, how beings of fleshly nerves and human

minds were treated by their fellows. There they are shown the passage by which the ghostly confessor was conveyed to give to the doomed that hope of mercy from God which men never felt: and to impart to him those sacraments of the church which, if they can once be obtained, an Italian judgment in general pronounces “ killing no murder.” There they hear how the strangled body, secretly accused, secretly tried, secretly condemned, and secretly murdered, was borne out by a secret door opening into the fair Adriatic, there consigned to the hideous boat,—we must not here call it gondola,—and then secretly buried in the deep, silent pool ~~to~~ which, if a luckless fisherman approached, his loom was to join the heap of water-graves therein.

Leave these dark tales in their darkness. It is only happy spirits that will ever do real good on the earth. Yet do not remove their reliques; let them remain, that the memory of the glory that has departed from the world may have its counterpoise in that of the gigantic evil which has passed away with it.

“ Would the signora wish to go to that post and kiss it ? ” asked our gondolier quite gravely. He pointed to a post for fastening the gondolas, which, as usual, stood near to a fine old palace in the Grand Canal.

"E perchè?" we demanded, seeing that he had suspended his oar for an answer.

Because one Milordi Bironi, whom he used to hear of when he was a boy, who wrote a Tasso for the English, had fastened his gondola to that post: and when this man had informed an English gentleman of the fact, he exclaimed, "To the post! to the post!" "I rowed him up to it," said the narrator, "and he threw his arms about it, and kissed it, and pressed it to his heart, crying, 'Caro, carissimo, Milordi Bironi,—dear, dearest Lord Byron.' And that was because he wrote a Tasso for the English," said our gondelier. "And the name of Milordi Bironi's gondelier was Beppo; my father knew him well, and had been his comrade; but that Milordi Bironi wrote Beppo's history in verse, and it made his fortune; for all the English who ever came to Venice asked for Beppo, and so he died rich."

Adieu to the mournful widow of the Adriatic. She is "a widow indeed." I saw her again; but there is more mystery to come.

CHAPTER IX.

GENOA.

WE had lost our Albert O'Donnell just when we most wanted him. Once on Italian ground, we missed him at every step ; the spirit that had haunted the backward ages, the romantic mind, and vivid imagination. With our artist guide, I might be almost justified, even at the eleventh hour, in talking of the thousand churches of Venice, its memorial palaces and by-gone romance. We might with him have lingered in Padua, and talked beneath its colonnades over its ancient learning and grave repute, which still appears to have left its impress on the aspect of its old visage ; and given a whole five minutes from our railroad course to muse on

“ Starry Galileo and his woes,”

weak though he was to yield his scientific faith to the decrees of a power which religious faith has so often and bravely withheld ; and to

are lanes and alleys different, but these only approximate to what we have at home. And they are filled with beauteous women and dark-eyed girls; that graceful muslin mezzero just shading a sunny cheek, slightly covering their rich braided hair, but not veiling the full dark eyes.

It is beautiful in an evening at Genoa to stand within a gorgeous church at vespers, and see these kneeling figures, draped in light thin white, put over the head you know not how, and held with one hand you see not where.

We were told that English ladies had affected the use of the mezzero; but I should think it must look out of character in the wearer of an English bonnet. What is most surprising, is that we never once saw one of these ethereal head-scarfs, which reach nearly to the feet, the least soiled or disarranged, far less dirty. The sky was cloudless, certainly, and the air free from smoke; but still they were worn by women going to market, and carrying bundles of household goods with this delicate article of dress.

The surprise that awaited us on entering the Hôtel de Londres looks a little like *un coup de théâtre*, yet it was the most common-place occurrence in the world.

Every traveller pauses to look at the great

placard in the hall, which announces the style and title of the other inmates of the hotel. So we did, and out of names from every clime of the sun, Geraldine pointed to a rather common one of our own land.

It was prefaced by the title of Monsieur ; I looked at it, and thinking she alluded to that preface, replied,

“ Oh ! that is quite *comme il faut*. ‘ *Les Anglais en voyage*’ always merge the horrible mister, and missis, and miss, into the more sonorous French ; and heartily do I wish that, among all our ludicrous adaptation of French words, those of monsieur, madame, and made-moiselle, might be adopted. We have forgotten how to speak our own English, but we must, I suppose, retain our own hideous titles ; though shopmen do not know now what scarlet or cherry-colour means.”

“ Don’t break forth into a tirade,” said Geraldine, laughing ; “ I only wanted to show you that that is the name of my betrothed.”

“ So it is !” I said, looking at it again, “ but it is a very common one.”

“ Oh, yes,” she replied ; and we were about to move on, when an exclamation from Evelyn held us fast.

“ Look here !” she cried, “ Monsieur Uncle

et Madame Aunt Patrick, et Monsieur Albert O'Donnell!"

Evelyn clapped her hands, and we were looking at each other in great glee, when Geraldine's firm voice and pale face drew our attention from the placard; she was saying to our most obliging landlord,

"I am very sorry for the trouble we have occasioned, but we cannot stay here."

He broke out into a thousand natural wonders, and the six porters (that number was singularly few for three people in Genoa), three of whom had each a portmanteau on one shoulder, while the other three had a hand-box in one hand, looked partly as if they sided with the landlord, partly as if they speculated on a second "job."

"We cannot stay here," said Geraldine, and at once landlord, porters, and expecting waiters, yielded to the will that was thus expressed.

But as we were departing, the good host ventured to express his regret, not on his account, but our own; he knew what the English required, and we could have had the very rooms looking on the pier which an English party had just vacated.

"Who were they," I cried; for I was tired, and the prospect of a chamber looking on the

pier was too pleasant to be lightly abandoned.

Certainly, the signora would know, for English from her country must be known to her; and his finger traced the list until it rested on the party we were flying from; they had gone that morning; but when their names would go was another question.

"They are gone!" I said to Geraldine, and she sighed, foolish woman, and said,

"They are gone!" And so as the people had gone, whom we would have liked best to be with, we stayed, and took their empty apartments, and sat in their seats, and slept in their beds, and looked out on the ~~promenade~~ on the pier they had looked at, and I dare say said what they had said,—“It is very fine!”

And I found Genoa a pleasant city to sojourn in; and as I was not in the “pink prison,” described in the “pictures from Italy,” I enjoyed it, and some pleasant days we spent among its vestiges of what had once existed, like its Andrea Doria, and like him had passed away to dust, to appear no more. No more!—who can say that.

And from Genoa we took our way in the most *imposing* of all conveyances, in one sense, if not in another, for you are obliged to pay

for fare, which, on one pretence or another, you are never allowed to make use of.

The first day brought us to Leghorn, the second to Civita Vecchia, the third to Naples. At each of these places, as was quite natural, the passengers were sent on shore to eat, at their own expense, the dinner they had paid for beforehand, to eat on board: but at Leghorn we spent the time in another manner, for we posted off by the railroad to the leaning tower of Pisa, and contrived to see it, and its baptistery and splendid cathedral, and most singular Campo Santo, and interesting botanical garden, and return with the bustling Chargé d'Affaires, ~~who~~ was filling the place of the ambassador of France at Rome, and was as bustling and important as any Chargé d'Affaires could be.

And there was a traveller with us, who was greatly disappointed with the leaning tower, and thought the spire of the church at Chesterfield was almost as crooked. But the Campo Santo had engrossed us more than the leaning tower.

Now, not being able, while thus intent on feeding the mind, to spare time for the grosser aliment, I was really very hungry when we got back to our floating *salle à manger*, and its visionary meals.

Some people have that spirit of resistancy within them, that enables them to go without what they want, rather than be cheated into having it; and, though I saw everyone else paying for meals, just as if they had not paid for them beforehand, I recollect that the Neapolitans were notorious for never being able to speak truth, and for always being ready to make a little money; so, imitating the example of good Aunt Patrick, in setting a proper one to other people, I think I almost resolved to starve sooner than pay for the meal a second time. I knew the supper would appear, when the passengers got sufficiently sea-sick not to eat it, and I resolved to await that suspicious moment; for I felt I had malice enough in my constitution to prevent the effects even of the horrible “sea” that usually prevails in that direction.

While thus resolutely waiting in our Neapolitan steamboat *salle à manger*, I was a little diverted from the *ennui* of expectation, by hearing a traveller from one of the bordering Swiss cantons describing to an Italian the manners and customs of the English nation. He said he had been sent on a confidential mission to London, at a time when the Bank of Paris was on the point of failing. My ear was caught by the following speech.

“ In England,” said the expositor of our nation, as wisely perhaps as other travellers speak, “ in England all is gigantic. There you see omnibuses which hold three dozen persons inside, and are drawn by six horses. They have a coachman clothed in scarlet, with an under-coachman at each side: the office of the two under-coachmen is to look at each footway, and tell the head coachman when to stop. In these omnibuses not a word is spoken; not one word: they go on in silence; but at times each passenger cries out ‘ Stop ! ’ ”—the effect of this little word, introduced in its original nudity, was exquisite—“ he cries out ‘ Stop ! ’ and in England all is regulated by the single word ‘ stop ! ’ ”

The wondering Italian, who listened to him, had not—perhaps the speaker had not either—the least idea what the one English word “ stop ” signified.

“ Yes,” said the speaker, “ in England all is solemn, all is gigantic; and that one word ‘ stop ! ’ regulates everything: that word and one more—‘ the law ! ’ If two men are quarrelling, another comes up, and says, ‘ The law ! ’ and they rest stupified, petrified at that word ‘ the law ! ’ Yes, these two are the magic words of England.”

When we went to our berths, I was relating this learned traveller's story to Evelyn, who occupied that immediately beneath me; poor Geraldine was quite ill; and even feminine tongues are silent in sea-sickness. My description was interrupted by a French speaker at the door. It was a male voice, prefacing a French speech with the endearment "Cara mia," in Italian, pronounced in all the sweetness and tenderness any voice of any land is capable of.

And in answer to it, one of the very handsomest faces I ever saw, or imagined, looked out from the narrow crib opposite the door. It was a youthful one too: dark as night, yet full of light, as if the sun shone beneath the rich brown cheek, and beamed warmly forth from the luminous black eyes. We wanted to see it again, to gaze longer upon it, and at times through the night we did so, for a moment, when that voice of tender and deep love spoke at the door. Now that man was evidently keeping watch and ward over that dark beauty, and I believe that every woman who has passed a night at sea without being exposed to that peculiar surveillance has felt a little annoyed at having another made its constant object. When experiencing, in single

blessedness, all the miseries of a night at sea, it is very tormenting to have a man poke his head in at the door of the ladies' cabin, and call out loudly "How are you now, my dear?" or even whisper a more softened inquiry. So when this deep voice of love came several times to the door of our cabin, I grew at last impatient and dashed aside the little red curtain, thinking that I would intercept the light of the dark orbs that duly answered it.

But when he was gone, and she had sunk back in her crib, I leaned down and whispered to Evelyn, "Do you know that troublesome man is very like"—

"Who?" she cried, starting upright in hers.

"Oh! no one you could have ever seen since you were eight years old."

"Oh! dear! you startled me so; is that all?" and she lay down again, and fell asleep, so that I could talk to her no more, or tell her if it were all or not.

CHAPTER X.

NAPLES.

I HAVE now to relate the accidents of a midnight visit to Mount Vesuvius.

The day of our arrival at Naples had been intensely warm, and, wearied with our voyage, we longed for the shades of evening to refresh us. They came. I was alone in my little chamber at the top of the house, and went out on a pleasant stone platform, on which the French window opened, to enjoy the cooling air and delightful view of the Bay of Naples ; that sight to which we turn as a blessed relief from the noise and idleness of the most noisy city on earth, the gayest, the most seemingly contented. On that fair bay the softened light of retiring day was still lingering, though sinking rapidly into the deeper twilight of the clear calm night.

On the other side of the bay was a great mountain, and on the side of the mountain I saw a red spot like an unblazing furnace.

They had told me Vesuvius was there, and I had heard of Vesuvius so long as a familiar thing, which millions of travellers had gone up and down in one manner or other, been pulled up, or carried up, or even walked up; and had looked into its crater, or gone down into it, and eaten eggs roasted in its ashes, and burned their sticks in its crust, and done all sorts of tricks that showed they were on such intimate terms with the monster, that Vesuvius was, in my imagination, a very common-place and lacknied thing.

But now, when the refreshing air drew me out to the platform that fronted the bay, I started at seeing that deep red spot: and while I looked, I saw it grow larger and larger, and brighter and brighter: it did not come from the crater, but from an orifice on the side of the mountain below it.

I ran away to call Evelyn and Geraldine, and when we congregated on the platform, not many minutes afterwards, what a sight met our view! That dark red spot had spread on, and out, and flowed down in a long, wide river of flame, descending the whole length of the cone, and reaching to the plain beneath it, while its great fiery shadow trembled nearly across the whole width of the bay.

A cry of wonder and delight burst from us all; but as we uttered it, we almost thought we could hear a roar, for up shot into the quiet air a pillar of fire from the crater itself; and out through it there flew innumerable sparkles, strange, natural fireworks, bursting and dispersing, and falling in a glowing shower; while through that beautiful shower enormous stones, red-hot, were hurled hundreds of feet from the unquiet centre, as if against the dark vault above them, and returned, cast back to earth, where they fell, rolling down the cone, and gradually losing their brightness.

Wonderful, glorious sight! And I was permitted to enjoy it! to sit there during the soft, warm hours of an Italian night, while the flames or red light of Vesuvius was all the light I had. To sleep in the hot day was far better, and to lie awake at night on my mosquito-guarded couch, and with my French window wide open, to look out on that burning mountain.

It is one of the happiest of my numerous accidents of travel, that I should, quite unpremeditatedly, have caught Vesuvius in a state of activity,—I was going to say eruption; but activity is the more descriptive and expressive word they designated its state by at Naples.

To reach that river of burning lava, and look

into it, was my resolve; how it was to be accomplished I knew not, but to accomplish it I determined. Where there is a will there will be a way; so as I had the will, our landlord provided the way; and with Geraldine's English servant, a trusty Italian one, and a fourth part of the guides that were offered, we determined to set out on the third evening after its appearance, to pay it a visit in person.

Now, that morning Geraldine wanted to pay another visit to the great museum of Naples, where all the relies of Pompeii are treasured. Different persons have different tastes, and these interested her more than my dear lava-stream and pillar of fire. Having spent some hours there before, I left her and Evelyn together, and repaired to Virgil's tomb; which place, they say, has the more undoubted fame of having been that of an English lady's lap-dog.

And so at that picturesque old tower, canopied by ivy, and all surrounded with pretty wild things, which deck, with nature's ever-renewing work, the monuments of man's decay, I sat down for a moment to rest, and, looking up, I saw—was it Virgil's ghost, or that of Albert O'Donnell, with a portfolio under its arm?

I screamed, I think; but if any one had seen him, it might be believed it was me he was so

enraptured to get a glimpse of. Poor young man ! He sat at my feet, and clasped my hand, and looked as if he were lifted up quite above Virgil's tomb ; and this was merely because I had been lately with his Beatrice, had come from her, could tell him something of her. I told him everything ; of her being about to fly from the hotel at Genoa, and all. I resolved he should have no hope.

"She is right," he said meditatively, "quite right," and he sighed deeply ; "all she does is beautiful, noble, worthy of Geraldine."

"You will not then attempt to see her ?" I remarked, thinking my end was gained.

"Not for worlds ! to see her ? hah ! but to meet her, cause her an instant's pain, no, never."

"That is right."

So we talked of other things. I listened to his glowing words, his vivid imaginings, and droll descriptions of what Aunt and Uncle Patrick had thought and said and done ; until, suddenly recollecting our expedition to the burning river, I told him I must go, and the cause.

"To-night, in the dark, you will all be on Vesuvius ?" he said, as if an idea occurred to him.

"Yes," I said ; "but there is nothing in

that, every one does so; it will be crowded, and there is no danger."

"Oh! I did not think of that. Well, *addio*; I may, I know, rely on you to say nothing of having met me; not to mention me either now, or, if you should see me again. It would only once more disturb that angelic mind to know I was, although unintentionally, in her neighbourhood."

"I shall say nothing, if you wish it."

"I do; it is better not."

"*Addio.*"

There is a carriage now up to the hermitage on Mount Vesuvius. We were incredulous when first told we could drive up a part of the volcano: but there is an observatory built on Vesuvius, and a road has been made up to it.

The mule and pony and donkey men of Torre del Greco were indignant at our ascending the rich and lovely slopes, which were the domain of their animals and guides, in a carriage. We were surrounded, besieged, and with noble courage fought our way through, and brought our carriage onward; followed, however, by a good number of men and boys, who clamoured immensely, and declared it was impossible for a carriage to go on. The coachman did not say yes, or no: he was quite pas-

sive, as he was paid beforehand ; but he held the reins, and the horses stopped ; and then all the followers shouted “ Ecco !” and then Geraldine’s servant took the reins, and the horses went on again, drawing us up the luxuriant base of the mountain, among vines, figs, lemons, oranges, pomegranates, dates, olives, pine-apples ; the locus-tree, which is believed to have fed John the Baptist, the bread-tree, and cotton-tree ; the myrtle, cactus, and things rare to us, and too many to mention ; while the richly-setting sun shone over the luxuriant scene, and the busy city of Naples, with its villas and gardens, and the calm blue bay, with its classic isles, all rested beneath our eyes, while on raising them more upward to the higher region of the mountain, an aspect of perfect, and even horrible desolation, was before us ; no vegetation, no sign of life ; nothing but the volcano at work.

We stopped at the hermitage ; and when the sun was quite departed, and before the moon had risen, we mounted our ponies and set off on our expedition. Mine was called Macaroni, and the incessant chatter of its owner, his songs, and the customary signal-shouts which break the silence of the scene, I really could have gladly dispensed with, had I

been alone; but our huge torches were not yet lighted, and I saw that, just behind the six guides who attended us, two other figures were following. I suspected they were Uncle Patrick and Nephew Albert, and I felt the guides and their noise were a desirable intervention, as Geraldine's English and our Italian servant kept at our side; yet I trembled, lest Evelyn should take alarm.

When we stopped to dismount, the two figures disappeared behind a high bank. Here the great torches, about eight feet long, were lighted, and the glare they flung around revealed the most singular scene I could almost fancy.

A great field of blocks of lava, of that dark, iron-grey colour it assumes when cold, lay around the base of the cone; ashes, cinders, and enormous sharp-pointed masses, hard as iron, covered the dreary scene; while from the red summit, the fitful flame shot out with a low, continued roar, and fiery pumice-stones shot up against the night-shadowed skies, and fell back, sometimes into the raging centre, sometimes on the outside of the summit, where they rolled downward to add to the masses which now lay around us. Glittering ashes, more like sparkles of wood, diffused a strange

brilliancy on the scene, and continually strewing the outer summit, had rendered it one burning, though not blazing, mass.

“Great and glorious are thy works, oh ! Lord God Almighty !” says the Psalmist : and I believe we never felt more impressed with the feeling the exclamation indicates than when we stood, in the calm of a midnight hour, in the wild, strangely beautiful region of that magnificently blazing volcano !

It was not to the crater, but to the lava-stream, I wanted to go ; to approach the former, even if I had wished it, would on that night have been to have verified the fate our good Uncle Patrick that very night afterwards predicted, when he declared that, if I did not take care, I should, “like Ptolemy,” be swallowed up by lava. But our guides would make us believe that an expedition to the fiery stream would be at least as fatal in its result as Pliny’s curiosity. They affirmed that we could not walk over the lava-field ; and Geraldine, listening to their representations, thought herself unequal to the task.

“Besides,” she said, “I have a sort of impression that it is better I should not go. I know not whence it proceeds, but I had last night a strong, though undefined feeling that

something strange would befall me ; and perhaps it may be that if I went there I should perish among those horrid blocks, or tumble into your beautiful river of fire."

" Geraldine," said Evelyn, approaching, " do not laugh at these impressions ; they are not superstitious ; and when conveyed in that manner, without cause and during the inactive hours of night, I have never known them false, though they have been misinterpreted. Do not come with us. We two will go on, and do you go back, and sit in the carriage. You will find many ladies do the same."

" I will go back," she answered, " for I feel as if I ought to do so ; but I do not promise to sit in the carriage all the time ; I may stroll about."

" And then, perhaps, fall into danger just as much?" I interrupted, thinking, of course, of the two figures I had seen, and believing if " something strange " were to occur, my lava-stream would not be implicated.

" Never fear," she answered ; " I shall keep William with me," and so turned the head of her pony, and with William and a couple of the guides, who, being paid all the same, chose to return, she retraced the path to the hermitage.

As she disappeared, up rose Uncle Pat and

his nephew ; I was heartily glad to find their intention was to come to the stream instead of either going back to the hermitage or up to the summit. I had put Evelyn *au fait* as to the secret between O'Donnell and myself, for I knew how easily she would be alarmed in the gloom.

Thus ably escorted, guarded, and assisted, we boldly set forth. A scream, before many minutes, burst from us both ; and poised on the sharp blocks which pierced our feet like pointed spikes, we rested a space to know if we had courage to go on. Albert and his uncle, holding each a hand, kept us thus poised on the feet-cutting lava, until we made one, two, three hasty steps on things it was impossible to rest on ; but they believed a path would at last be found where we could tread more easily. Had we known that for more than a mile we were to walk over these singular stepping-stones, without finding a disencumbered spot, a smoother, easier surface for our feet, guided only by the wild glare of the great torches, and cheered by the hoarse roar of Vesuvius, and the shouts of the guides, I fear my determination would have given way. In ascending Vesuvius, neither ladies nor men need undergo fatigue, unless they wish it. A little money settles all that. They may be

carried up in chairs, or pulled up by guides, making-believe to use their own legs, and so satisfy themselves at the expense of other men's labours. In this place, however, no such help could be given; an extended hand, when one of us was trembling on a lava-spike, or a word of solicitude or encouragement, was all that could be done for us. Up ridges, into furrows, over enormous blocks, we toiled for one hour and a quarter; at last the excessively increasing heat, the sulphurous air, and thickening smoke, gave us information that we were approaching the desired region of our hope,—the region of fire.

“Eccolo!” shouted our guide, mounting a ridge of ashes and cinders. Uncle Patrick took the hand of one, and O’Donnell that of the other, and we were dragged upwards.

There it was, my own lava-stream, which I had nightly watched from my window. Wonderful sight! a pure river of fire, slowly but distinctly moving down! It was about thirty feet in width. It looked more like liquid mud on fire than anything else I could think of. A slight smoke was rising over it, and a constant fizzing sound was heard over the top, like what cinders make when cooling.

The ground was so hot, that we could not

stand an instant steady. I leaned over the fiery flood ; but the sulphurous exhalation overcame me ; I felt faint, and hastily withdrawing, interposed the ridge of cinders between myself and my lava-stream. When I got there, I perceived that my dress had come in contact with it, and, had it been of a more inflammable material, there would have been another blaze on Mount Vesuvius. As it was, the entire side was burned away. I called out ; and when nothing but the loss of a dress came of it, that wicked O'Donnell exclaimed,

“ What a noble torch you would have made for us !”

That idea I was not sorry to relinquish, and after another hour's toilsome promenade over the field of volcanic debris, we reached the path we had started from, and the touch of common earth was more* delicious than ever feet felt which had not been tottering from spike to spike for more than two hours, and at last were denuded of almost every bit of covering, both shoes and stockings. But not for all the shoes and stockings that ever were worn in the world, said Uncle Patrick, would he have gone without the expedition of that night ; and I fully agreed in the noble sentiment. As for Evelyn, though very nearly half dead,

she was in an ecstasy of rapture, which I believe would have kept us on Vesuvius some hours longer, if we had not known that Geraldine was waiting for us in solitude. Was it so?

Pleasant was our return in the deep calm stillness of the hour,—about two o'clock in the morning. The moon rose in her sweet majesty, contrasting her pale cold beams with the noisy, raging flames of the furious mountain. Poor O'Donnell, with a mournful sigh, reminded me of the sentiment his Beatrice had expressed in the moonshiny window of the Irish cot, about the one resembling the works of men, the other those of God.

How pleasantly in the sublime beauties of solitary nature, does the remembrance of past communion with a friend, who was as our own soul, return to us, provided no faults and follies, or sins, have left a dark dividing gulf between the PRESENT and PAST. He talked of his love as of a dear friend long dead.

What a scene the court of "the hermitage" presented! Men and women of all sorts and conditions, carriages ditto, ponies, donkeys, horses,—and a vast number of asses; everything but the carriages, and some ladies and servants who were fast asleep in them, made such a

clamour. We were hungry, thirsty, and tired ; and though poor Albert did cast a sort of terrified glance about him, we all entered the hermitage, quite sure that Geraldine would never have thought of doing so.

At a table in the scantily-furnished room sat a rosy priest, with a supper of bread, cheese, butter, apples, and common wine, before him. A calm-faced, respectable monk of St. Augustin, in his brown frock, cord, and sandals, sat on a stool at the side of the wall, in grave and dignified silence. The priest told us himself was the chaplain, who said prayers at the little chapel ; but the monk was the hermit, and the owner of the hermitage, which was literally crammed with visitors, being nothing more nor less than an inn.

The priest looked comical, when I asked him if this were really a hermitage.

" It is really a hermitage," he answered, " and there is the hermit."

" A solitary ?" I repeated.

" Si ; a solitary who lives in society."

Evelyn and I hastened in search of Geraldine, leaving Uncle Pat to draw in fresh tales of wonder to report to his good wife, who was, I am sure, praying for his safe escape meantime, and Nephew Albert to discourse with

the priest, the hermit, and a group of young German and Italian artists.

At the door we met our English William, who informed us his mistress was fainting, and that he had come to the house for some water. His composure, as with hat in hand he announced the matter, bewildered us at first.

“Where? how? and why?” were our eager demands.

“It was a strange gentleman, ma’am, I think,” said the solid Englishman, “who put her out of the way; she took a turn like, as soon as he was gone. They spoke some French tongue; I don’t rightly know what.”

We ran back with him, and found Geraldine sitting on a grassy hillock, a little out of the noise and bustle of the court. To our great astonishment, that usually firm and self-possessed woman threw her arms, first round one and then the other, and sobbed quite hysterically.

“What on the earth is the matter?” I asked; while Evelyn, looking much more terrified than Geraldine, clasped her in her arms, and drew her agitated face upon her bosom, as if to shield her from some fearful catastrophe.

Her evident terror had a good effect on

Geraldine, and trying to speak through the hysterical affection that convulsed her, she ejaculated,

“ Happiness ! happiness !”

Relieved, yet still more puzzled, we gave her some water, and then looking up at us she murmured in words broken by those hysterical sobs, .

“ That lovely girl in the packet, with the dark bright eyes, you told me of” —

“ Yes ; yes ; what of her ? tell us ; do.”

“ She is—she—is—his wife.”

“ Who ? what ? whose wife ?”

“ His — my betrothed’s. He married her before he left the Mauritius.”

“ Thank heaven !” cried that naughty Evelyn, with much devotion ; while as for me—I know not what made me do such a thing—some persons always are acting on impulses, and when they do so find them as good as motives ; so an impulse set me off running, in a most singular fashion, through all the *et ceteras* of the crowded court ; but just as a frightened sheep on a market-day will get safely through, so did I ; and into the hermitage I ran, and along the gallery, thronged with French, Italian, Russian, English, and many other servants, and into the very presence of *il solitario*, where I seized

Albert O'Donnell's shoulder, and uttered the only word my failing powers of breath could command, "Come!"

Uncle Patrick, with one hand set firmly on the table, stared. Albert rose, and ashy pale, but with a face of profound resignation, followed me, and Uncle Patrick followed him. I went back a little more slowly, and when Evelyn suffered the agitated Geraldine to lift up her head, Albert stood before his Beatrice.

* * * * *

We went back to Naples together, for Uncle Pat preferred the seat by the coachman, and there was one place vacant in our open carriage. The Neapolitan guide went before us with that horrid torch glaring in our aching eyes; so I was glad to close mine, and I believe the same sort of sleep that I fell into affected my neighbour Evelyn; so our *ris-à-vis* left us to dream. At times, indeed, we were sensible of that murmuring, dove-like sound, from the opposite seat, which has a sort of soporific influence on listeners, but which, to those who take part in it, is, I believe, doubly sweet when thus uttered by glimpses of the moon; the moon, too, of an Italian sky, and by night, on Mount Vesuvius! But, however, poor dear Evelyn and myself may be supposed

to have had our senses fast locked up ; and I do not think we opened either eyes or ears until we reached our hotel ; where, dizzy with fatigue, and blinded with the brightness of a newly-risen sun, for it was just five o'clock, we faltered out, "*Felice notte,*" and staggered to our rooms, leaving Uncle Pat and Nephew Albert to go off to their own hotel.

And there I, at least, slept until one o'clock that afternoon.

So ended our midnight visit to Mount Vesuvius, and such were the accidents that befel us.

CHAPTER XI.

NAPLES—ROME.

AT one o'clock at noon I was awakened by another of those strange accidents, a kiss upon the check. I started up, and saw Geraldine in her blue dressing-robe and disarranged hair, leaning over me.

"Awake!" she said; "it is so pleasant to awake to wish joy to others."

"I need not wish it to you, Geraldine—Beatrice—you possess it. Where is Albert?"

"In this house; and Uncle and Aunt Patrick; they are mine now, but I have not seen them since eight o'clock; I have been reposing—not sleeping."

And when I met Albert O'Donnell, he took my two hands in his, and bowed his eyes upon them, and they were moist with tears. To avoid the overflow of that tide of feeling which men are always more or less ashamed of permitting, I inquired if he had seen Evelyn.

"Yes; I have seen that angelic girl," was his response; "ah! if you had seen her almost celestial face! Why is it that with such keen susceptibilities for happiness, she appears to have lost the hope of it for herself?"

As if to relieve me from answering the question, Geraldine entered the room. The happy Albert sprang to meet her, and I ran away to find my Evelyn.

"How was it that man came to marry the fascinating brunette?" I asked her.

"Because she was fascinating, I suppose," said Evelyn; "but no matter how, or why; may they be happy, since they have, though involuntarily, made others so. That letter she got at Munich was, just what Geraldine partly suspected, meant to alarm her into a refusal: when the answer was so long delayed, in consequence of the wanderings of the letter, he interpreted her silence differently from what most people do, and married the beautiful girl he adored. He was on his way to England on business when he met Geraldine so apropos on Mount Vesuvius; but he was so fearful that his charming young wife should know the secret of their engagement, that the greater part of their interview was spent in imploring her not to reveal it, a promise which the forsaken one most readily made."

"Well, I must say it was manlike to act like that! while she was so faithful to her word, even against the dictates of her heart."

"We judge as erroneously of men in the aggregate," said Evelyn wisely, "as they do of us."

"However," I rejoined cheerily, "she has 'saved her honour and kept her money,' as an Irish gentleman said, when, after paying a 'debt of honour,' he took the money out of the man's pocket afterwards, when he was asleep."

"There is nothing apropos in the story," said Evelyn, looking a little reproachful.

"Oh no: it only occurred as a random recollection. I rejoice in all the events of Mount Vesuvius as much as you do. Whenever I want to put an end to an interminable love affair, I will bring the parties for an explosion to Vesuvius. Come, now, let us find Aunt Patrick, and hear the dear old soul's droll speeches."

So that evening—for how the day passed I know not—we never went out, never did anything, said anything, nor am I sure that we thought anything; our brains were in a species of whirl, which allowed no one idea to fix; they were in a state very like the activity of Vesuvius, throwing up a deal of flashy sparkles, scattering here and there, and ending in ashes.

But in the evening we began to grow calm and cool, and went out on the platform off my room, and there we had a tea-table carried, and two couches ; and on one of the sofas sat Geraldine, Albert, and myself, and on the other Evelyn and Aunt and Uncle Patrick. I do not know why I was installed next the lover, unless it was because I had pulled him out of the hermitage ; but I had before suspected that Geraldine's morning kiss was *en revanche* for my midnight *coup de main*.

And now, when we all began to lament the fatigues and strange rencontres which travel will, I suppose, always produce, all the rest of the party joined in advising my sweet companion and myself to travel no more, but to settle down somewhere quietly, and lead “useful lives.”

“ And very near to *us*, ” said Albert, making that plural number very emphatic.

“ I fear that would never do, Albert, ” said Geraldine, softly ; “ for if you consent, we shall settle in the wilds of Ireland.”

He turned suddenly round, and caught her hand :

“ Geraldine ! you, with all your acquired and natural refinement, your habits of intellectual luxury, your elegant tastes”—

She slightly pressed the hand that held hers, and stopped the speaker : “ Do you remember our conversation in the Schloss Teriolis ? ” she asked, smiling.

“ Do I ? hah ! ”

“ Well, it was theory then : can it not be practice now ? A life of action, not of thought merely, is before you now, Albert, before me too. I have led a very selfish life ; thanks to dear Evelyn, I have latterly seen this ; but there was a difficulty in remedying it, without risking to become what is termed an active character, a busy, talked-of person, a woman who either made herself a general applicant on behalf of all good or religious purposes, or was made the object of general applications. But it is, indeed, my desire to burst that fearful chain of selfishness which in England, I believe, more than in any other land, enwraps the souls of men ; which, if it be its present safety, in making the great, the rich, and the commercial classes be at ease and quiet, will surely sooner or later be its punishment. Money is in our possession, and want and woe, misery, degradation, and ignorance, are rife enough in England. There, it is true, we might live, and live usefully. But Ireland is your country, and must be mine ; a wife is

but a secondary ; let us live there, because it is your country, and because I believe it is the most degraded, the most uncivilized, the most ungrateful part of our native dominions.

“Let us go there, not to preach to the people, not discuss, not to disgust them, but to show them how Christians can live, how Christ taught them to live ; to instruct them to be decent, industrious, and moral, even if we cannot, in the way we could desire, make them religious. Let us spend our time, our influence, our money, in making others happy, since God in His mercy has made us so.”

Albert pressed to his lips the hand he held, and whispered,

“I will live in your life ; then I shall learn how to live.” Then, more gaily, he added, “Shall we then purchase a property in my dear semi-savage land, and make it a model estate ?”

“Oh, yes,” cried Geraldine, with animation ; “and if the bishop permit, we will build a church close to our house.”

“Ah ! dearest, you may have to build the house first.”

“True ; and, perhaps, better so, for the first object is to employ labour. But if the church is built, it must be so situated that daily service can be performed ; and our dependants, as

many as freely will come, shall duly attend it ; and we will be among them, as if of them, in worship at least, and have no distinction of place, and no easy cushioned seats for the rich, while to the poor, in utter defiance of the scriptures we daily read, we say, ‘Stand ye there, or sit here at my footstool.’”

“*Nous avons changé tout cela,*” said Albert, smiling at her warmth.

“ What are they talking of, my dear ?” said Aunt Patrick, slyly getting me away.

“ They are going to live in Ireland, and cure all its evils,” I answered.

“ Cure it ! the poor, innocent creatures ; why, its ruined and murdered they’ll be ! What do they know about the potatoes, or the pigs, or the priests ? and sure it’s popery, my dear, popery, and nothing else, that’s the evil of Ireland.”

“ Well, popery has not been rooted out by one system of efforts ; perhaps it would not be dangerous for one pair of human creatures to try another. If each responsible native of that, or any land, were, like Albert and Geraldine, to resolve to discharge, as consistent followers of Christ, their own moral obligations, perhaps a change, which clamour has never produced, might sooner or later be effected.”

We might have said more, but Albert's speech was here plainly heard. With that droll smile in his eyes, which was always more irresistible than his words, he said to his love,

"And now, dearest, we have planned the labour of a long life; ought we not to begin at once to perform it?"

"Certainly," Geraldine replied, in a very decided, yet totally abstracted manner, being at the moment intent on a new Irish speculation. She looked up, and discovering his meaning in those bright eyes, she blushed, and made the matter worse by hastily saying, "I beg your pardon!"

It was impossible to avoid a laugh; and Uncle Pat indulged in it rather loudly.

"Do not retract that one word—that 'certainly'—do not, my own sweet love," Albert fervently murmured.

"Oh! do not!" cried Evelyn, "for"—she looked down, and a lovely blush overspread her face.

Geraldine went to her, and bending over her till her fine black hair mingled with the silky tresses of the fair, timid girl, whispered a request to know the cause of her desire.

"I wish to be at your wedding," said Evelyn, in answer; and that answer was the de-

ciding vote in favour of Albert O'Donnell's motion.

And we sat there till very late that night, and cried out, "Look there!" when a flame from the burning mountain shot up higher than usual. And Vesuvius has blazed on and on for ages, and probably will for ages more; and similar hearts may there beat with emotions such as throbbed in some of ours; but never, perhaps, was a holier resolution taken in its presence, than that which called two human beings from a life of selfish luxury to one of beneficent, active, self-denying devotedness.

No one, perhaps, will wonder, under the circumstances, that the marriage of Albert and Geraldine was very soon afterwards performed at the British embassy. In fact, every one agreed that propriety was rather more for than against the proceeding.

Uncle Patrick gave her away as if he did not at all regret the act. Evelyn made a most captivating bridemaid, and Aunt Patrick and I would have done very well as witnesses, only that the good creature was in such an ecstasy of tears and smiles, that I doubt if she knew whether the parties were married or not.

"Well, my dear," she said, after it was over, "every one will believe me again! I

told you my nephew was a genius ; I knew he'd come to something great ; and she owes her husband to me, dear ; to me, and to no one else ! I knew he was a genius ; though he had some queer notions, as geniuses, you know, always have. What do you think of him that said one day he would write his name on water !—he did upon my word !—but he won't be thinking of such foolish experiments now, you know."

The bridal pair set off directly on a tour of their own devising, and left to us the charge of seeing their uncle and aunt on board the steamer, that went direct to Southampton ; the old couple believing it safer to consign themselves to the tender mercy of the deep than to that of foreign tongues.

As we were receiving, from the dear old woman, a last embrace, for the hundredth time, on board the packet which was on the point of sailing, she thus addressed us :

" My poor, dear creatures, I'm going to leave you !" here a burst of real honest tears occurred. " You see that what I say always comes true : I said—you must remember that—as sure as two and two made four, them two would make one, and it came true ! And now they are gone, and we are going, and you two, poor things ! will be left to yourselves ;

but, my dear creatures, take my last advice, and don't go to Babylon!" She lifted up her hands, and let them fall as if lead were attached to them.

"To Babylon!" said Evelyn, in a voice of wonder, looking into her face as if to decipher her geographical meaning; "we are going to Rome."

"Oh, my dear, that is your ignorance; but I know it, I have been taught it. Believe me, Babylon *is* Rome, and Rome *is* Babylon, and the pope *is* anti-Christ, and anti-Christ *is* the pope. It's all one thing. So the last word I have to say to you is—don't go to Babylon!"

I almost wish we had obeyed her "last word."

Yet that very evening we were at Capua. A vetturino was departing from our hotel with a Roman artist, his wife, and an English "traveller." The landlord recommended our joining the party, who were likewise going to Rome, and we did so.

And at Capua (the new) the blessed days of my childhood were brought back to me, when I remembered my dear old hero, Annibal, and his Carthaginians; why he was my hero, I do not know, except it was that he melted the Alps with boiling vinegar. But when, as a child of eight years old, I have in spirit

fought the battles of the Romans and Carthaginians, I was always on the side of the latter. Glorious days !

“Once more, who would not be a girl ?”

Not the artificial thing enswathed in the swaddling-bands of a fashionable education, but a free and happy child, drinking in its old wild streams of curious lore.

And the name of Capua brought back recollections of my own unfettered childhood, because Annibal’s soldiers had been encravated by its luxuries, and found its wine too good. And the name of Capua brings wine to my recollection again as I write : for into the hotel where we dined at Capua, came an English traveller, and called aloud, “Waiter, bring me a glass of wine ;” and the waiter went to a comrade, and said “glass,” for the word perplexed him ; “wine” he probably knew was *vino* ; but what could “glass” be ?

And the Englishman said, for the information of all present, “I never speak any of their foreign tongues, but I make them understand me, for all that. Waiter ! I say,” more authoritatively, “bring me a glass of wine.”

“Glass,” muttered the perplexed youth again.

" You should say *bicchiera*, Sir," some one whispered the traveller.

" Bickery ! bickery ! is it ?" pouted Mr. Bull ; " Well, then, waiter, bring me a bickery of wine, you blockhead."

And so an end to Capua, its Carthaginians, Goths, and Vandals.

And on we went over the strange Campagna di Roma, where every sod might have its memories ; but puerile are the attempts to turn them. Leave it to its buffaloes, and other far more wretched occupants.

But the bright morning sun has risen, and our vetturino, in the customary tone, cries " Roma !" and then flourishes round his whip, and cuts a few capers on his seat ; and at last shouts aloud " Viva Pio Nono !" as if his heart would burst without that gush of liberty.

The dome of St. Peter's is before us, and the eternal city is stretched out in the plain ; and why is that I ask, without the least emotion or feeling in my heart — " Is that Rome ?" — I do not know, and perhaps thousands of other eager visitants, who had just attained the ultimatum of their wishes, have been as unable to account for their sensations on first seeing Rome from the Campagna. There is so little imposing in its aspect at a little

distance ; and our minds are in the past while our eyes at first behold only the present. When we get within its gates, we return to a middle state ; the ruin of the past, without the life of the present.

But there are those gates before us ; and as we approached them with kindling and deepening emotions, lo ! stretched on the road across our path, not three hundred yards from the gate, there lay a murdered man ! The morning sun shone down on the stiffened body, that lay in the red pool over which the flies were hovering. A lamp was burning beside it, and a soldier, with his musket beside him, sat on the bank, guarding the dead until the authorities came. But when would they come ? The artist seemed to think that would be a work of time.

Evelyn hid her face in her hands, shuddering ; "Such," she said, "is our entrance to Rome ! Murder ! Oh ! Heaven."

"She will faint!" cried the artist ; "the sight of the blood has shocked her. Ah ! we know not how soon that may be a common sight."

"But will not the murderers of this poor man be taken ? I inquired, anxious to leave poor Evelyn to herself."

"There is little anxiety to take murderers here," he answered, "when they must be supported at the expense of our taxation, and may be maintained by the government two or three years before they are tried, five or six before they are condemned, and ten or twelve before they are executed."

And then we entered the gates of Rome : and our artist had another occasion to animadver^t on the vices and inefficiencies of the Papal government.

"What shall we soon do in England for stories?" I asked Evelyn ; "the tales of the Inquisition and of the escapes of monks and nuns, will be soon no more. A short time ago I suppose this man would have appeared in an *auto-da-fe* for such opinions."

What led to their expression was the usual imposition of the Custom-house ? "Its officers," said our artist, "pay themselves by a double robbery. They rob the government which does not pay them sufficiently, and they rob strangers who pay them too much." It was represented to us on entering, that by feeing the officer we should escape the annoyance and delay of having our luggage searched. We yielded, though rather against my will, and paid what was demanded. On re-entering the vettura from the house where the money had been paid, we

found another man pulling down the luggage, while the sentinel stood before the horses. I ran back and told the man to whom we had paid our fee. He came out, looked at the proceeding, threw out his hands, and threw up his shoulders, and went to his office again.

But we had entered Rome, “the city of the soul.” Diverted from the littleness of its present, the memory of its past was stealing back upon us: even then, its ruined monuments awoke once more our banished sympathies for her,

“Lone mother of dead empires!”

But on came a roaring multitude, pouring on as if in triumph, and shouts of “*Viva Pio Nono!*” rent the quiet morning air. At the head of this vast multitude was a short, stout, vulgar-looking man, adorned with a peacock’s feather fastened in his hat. The crowd prevented our progress; and that man, with his look of conscious popularity and rude energy of expression, was evidently its leader.

“It is Cicerouacchio,” said our artist, “or Angelo Brunetti; the people have nicknamed him the ‘fat chopped.’ There was a great banquet the other day for upwards of four thousand of the Roman people whom his eloquence has excited in behalf of the oppressed

Jews of the Ghetto. See how they adore him! —almost as much as it were *il buon Papa!*—he will lead them now to the Quirinal; the multitude will swell. They will go, and shout ‘*Viva Pio Nono,*’ under the palace windows, and the Pope will come out and give them his blessing, and they will go away.”

“Is it from love to the Pope they do that?” asked Evelyn.

“Yes, certainly; they adore him.”

“Or to show their strength?” I asked.

“It may have that effect also.”

The scene of that banquet, which gave the first vigorous impulse to the popular feeling of the lower order of Romans, was the field whereon Cincinnatus was taken from his plough to save and govern Rome. The story, as related by Cicerouacchio, might be interesting to the guests.

The people of Rome had in fact outgrown an ecclesiastical government; it was easy to see that they felt much as a great Tony Lumpkin might do under the rule of a mamma.

It is three hundred years ago since Machiavelli keenly said of the Papal states, “Once attained by fortune or virtue, nothing more is necessary to preserve them. Old religious institutions are their support, independently of the life or government of the sovereign. The

princes of the Church alone hold states which require no defence, and subjects who want no government. . . . The ecclesiastical are the only stable and peaceful states. Moreover, as they are regulated and sustained by causes superior to human reason, we abstain from speaking of them."

Whatever reason regulated them, ·it does not appear that human reason ever could have sustained them. That vast anomaly in the history of nations, a priestly government, was now being shaken to its foundations. Its economical and executive system was decidedly the worst in the world.

Gregory XVI. died at a critical moment, when the subjects of the princes of the Church were beginning to feel that Machiavelli was wrong when he said they "wanted no government," or when they interpreted that satire as it was meant. Rome was now leading the way to the revolutions that were to convulse Europe; the train was ready throughout its whole extent, but at Rome the fire was to be struck; from the seat of the once arbitrary Church was it to proceed; and Pius IX., the mild, the benevolent, "the good Papa," was coming forth with his own peaceable hand to spring the mine.

They say that the aspect of the sky on the

day when the Conclave sat to elect the new Pope was in unison with the moral clouds that hovered over fallen Rome—dark, lowering, and heavy; the visages of the Romans wore the reflection of both.

The augur is no longer a mighty and an established personage in Rome, but auguries are as devoutly credited as ever; and when Pio Nono wept at his election, methinks it was no doubtful augury of his career; but it was a misunderstood one at the moment.

In the stately fane dedicated to the fisherman of Galilee, the master of the ceremonies, at his coronation, bore the customary cushion or open pillow of tow, and another carried a silver stick with a bunch of tow at the end, and in passing the statue of St. Peter (*cidévant' Jupiter*), they both stopped before Pope Pius IX., and the clerk set fire to the tow, and the master of those pompous ceremonies chanted aloud, “Sancte Pater, sic transit gloria mundi!”

And even now was the moral of that ceremony performed at the installation of the Popes being verified, and the glory which the world had given, the world was taking away.

But the history of the reign of Pius IX. is yet in embryo. We look on, and see what

passes, and may guess how the scale may turn, whether the Church or its opposing power will prevail. We hear that, in alluding to the blasphemy of his people (a part of them at least), the Pope has said, "They cast against Heaven the stone which crushes them as it returns." But may it not temporally crush him? Yet now he is thought a man for his times.

In the Quirinal palace, fifty-and-one solemn cardinals were met in deliberation, and without its walls an expectant multitude hung in the breathless calm which predicts a storm. A tedious sitting was expected. The people impatiently demanded, not a spiritual father, but a temporal sovereign, who would hear the voice they were ready to raise. The Church was a widow; her Papal spouse was dead; but the anxiety of the Romans is not for the Church.

Then the fifty-and-one hear, as it were, the distant roar of a dissatisfied people; a decision must be speedy, or all will be lost.

The best-hearted, the easiest, the least offensive of the sacred body, is elected without foreign intervention; at the sole will of the Conclave, or, as it is said, "by the inspiration of God;" they salute the good, peaceable bishop of Imola, sovereign pontiff of Rome.

Cardinal Maria Mastei Ferretti is Pio Nono, or Pius Nonus, or Pius the Ninth.

One month after his accession, the white cap turns the black balls to its own colour. Pius IX., in his first council, had laid his hand on the gospels authorized by his own Church, and had said,

“ My people may expect justice and mercy from me, for my only guide is this book.”

Beautiful sentiment; but the good man who was exalted to be at once the head of the Church and the king of Rome, knew not how dearly it would cost him to act upon it.

On goes the career of reform and liberalism. Railways are permitted, the amnesty is proclaimed, the prisons are opened, the exiled conspirators against Pope Gregory are received at the Quirinal.

The cardinals find “ the easy, good-hearted Pope” they had chosen, is ruling them, not being ruled by them.

Then there is great joy.: Rome blazes with light; the name of Pio Nono resounds through the day and the night.

The incarcerated for a score of years are free; untried, unjudged, they are pardoned.

The wandering exiles, picking up and disseminating evil in other lands, hurry back to

Rome. It is said that Pius IX. draws the elements of his greatness from the dungeons of his dominions. Fools and blind ! he is drawing his ruin from thence.

But the Romans adore their Papa ; they say he has given a new lesson to all the sovereigns of the earth,—and they are right ; that he has brought in a new moral era for the world ; that Pius IX. is greater than Cæsar.

He had granted *il perdono*,—that was the grand step : he had permitted railways,—that was a secondary ; for Rome will no longer live in the “middle ages.” The days of Pasquale still continued : the Pope’s titles afforded a monogram that gained high repute ; they were found to contain all the letters that could compose, in the original, the words—grateful names—amnesty and railways. Thus ran the monogram :

“ A Giovanni Maria Mastei Ferretti.
Grati nomi : Amnestia e ferrata via.”

But another appeared also, indicative of a foreboding, rather than a congratulation :

“ Pio, no, no.
Ma stai,
Vedremmo come tu governerai.”

But now, amid fears and hopes, felicitations

and forebodings, crowds followed *il buon Papa*, and pressed his life out with their kindness.

Flower-wreaths fell on his carriage, and troops came shouting round his palace; almost daily was the velvet carpet flung out on the balcony, and forth he came and blessed his loving, but rather rampant, sons; and, trembling at their strength and clamour, retired, half-fainting, to his palace, and felt, as many another papa would do, who had got too obstreperous children, wanting to coax him out of what they meditated taking by force, if denied.

And yet the beloved Papa was hailed with all sorts of wild demonstration, which he at first humbly, and then peremptorily, forbade; and still they went through the streets (when they could not show the mighty strength of their love by crowds and with flying banners) shouting, “Bravo Pio Nono! Bravissimo! Santo Padre!”

And the sounds were the latest Evelyn and I heard as we sunk to sleep in a street adjoining the Corso, where we were lodged.

CHAPTER XII.

ROME.

WE sat in the Colosseum, waiting for the full moon to rise. Whoever has done so, and not repeated the words, which, after all that has been said, written, or thought on the Colosseum of Rome, never have, and probably never will be equalled, we did not :

“ Oh, Rome ! my country ! city of the soul !
The orphans of the heart must turn to thee,
Lone mother of dead empires ! and control,
In their shut breasts, their petty misery.
What are our woes and sufferance ? Come and see
The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your way
O'er steps of broken thrones and temples, ye,
Whose agonies are evils of a day :
A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay.
But here, where murder breathed her bloody steam,
And here, where buzzing nations choked the ways,
And roared, or murmured like a mountain stream,
Dashing or winding as its torrent strays ;
Here, where the Roman millions' praise or blame

Was death or life, the playthings of a crowd,
 My voice sounds much, and fall the stars' faint rays
 On the arena void—seats crushed—walls bowed,
 And galleries where my steps wake echoes strangely
 loud.

“A ruin,—yet what ruin ! from its mass,
 Walls, palaces, half cities, have been reared ;
 Yet oft the enormous skeleton you pass,
 And marvel where the spoil could have appeared.
 Hath it indeed been plundered, or but cleared ?
 Alas ! developed, opens the decay,
 When the colossal fabric's form is neared,
 It will not bear the brightness of the day,
 Which streams too much on all years, man, have
 reft away.
 But when the rising moon begins to climb
 Its topmost arch, and gently pauses there ;
 When the stars twinkle through the loops of time,
 And the low night-breeze waves along the air,
 The garland-forest which the grey walls wear,
 Like laurels on the bold first Cæsar's head ;
 When the light shines serene, but does not glare,
 Then, in this magic circle raise the dead ;
 Heroes have trod this spot—'tis on their dust ye
 tread.

“While stands the Colosseum, Rome shall stand ;
 When falls the Colosseum, Rome shall fall,
 And when Rome falls—the world.' From our own land
 Thus spake the pilgrims o'er this mighty wall,
 In Saxon times, which we are wont to call
 Ancient ; and these three mortal things are still
 On their foundations, and unaltered all.”

Evelyn's voice sounded low and sweet as she repeated the Childe's exquisite description of the Colosseum, "unaltered all," since those eyes beheld it as ours were doing,

"When the light shone serene, but did not glare;"
and then she moved a little lower down,
"Where the stars twinkled through the loops of time;"
and, left to myself, my thoughts took another direction.

Down in the wide arena, appeared scarcely revealed in the moonlight which had not risen high enough to remove it from the shadow of the walls, sundry objects singularly out of unison with the memory of the fierce greatness to which it had once been dedicated: and as I looked down upon them, I thought once more,

"Alas! developed, opens the decay!"
the decay of other things, as well as that of the mighty and battered walls that are to last till Rome and the world shall fall.

In the dim twilight those petty emblems with which Papal Rome has seen fit to render tangible the Immortal Faith that overthrew the mythology of the Pagan city are happily obscured: but the broad glare of day reveals in painful, almost contemptible contrast, the poor, petty

shifts to which that modern and Christianized Rome has had recourse, in order to emblemataze the divine truths for which her martyrs wet with their blood the soil of that arena. Oh ! why—if indeed that faith which is “the evidence of things not seen,” must have such visible representations—why not depict it in a manner more worthy of it ? Why not shadow it forth in the highest, though still feeble, attempts of mortal power to conceive, and human skill to execute, some works approaching, even a little more nearly, to those in which heathens embodied their mythological creed ? Why thus excite in the mind that reflects on the ruined memorials of the *faith* which Christianity overthrew, a painful sense of the comparative littleness of the latter? Well might the so-called apostate, Julian, triumph, if his spirit could behold the poor, miserable crosses and crucifixes that appear in the arena of the mighty Colosseum, offering an indulgence to those who repeat the prayers prescribed for “the Station” which the Church has appointed in the great amphitheatre where the first children of Christ shed their blood.

Oh ! Christian Rome ! *my* voice will not “sound much,” or I would ask you why, if you must make idols, not make them even a little

more worthy of what they are intended to represent. How, with the models of an Apollo Belvedere or a Venus de' Medici before your eyes, can you tolerate the miserably distorted or insignificant objects with which you attempt to emblemataze an immortal, invisible faith?

A tinselled doll, clothed in the cast-off gaiety of some fine lady, in which she has sparkled in the ball, or appeared on her bridal day, is your representative of the holy being to whom you pay divine honours as the "Mother of God" and the "Queen of Heaven!" A painful, agonized figure, writhing in distortion, for which the calm dignity of the mysterious death on Calvary left you no example, daubed in the rudest colouring, and revolting alike to the eye of taste and heart of feeling, represents the incarnate God who brought life and immortality to light.

Oh! why, if you must tangibly represent the faith to whose sublime and hidden mystery the hearts of the proudest have bowed—whose holy, renewing influence the souls of the most sinful have felt—why give to a scoffing or incredulous world such pious works as make the faith of the ancients appear grand and soul-inspiring by the contrast? Look at the Pagan Pantheon, and then at your paltry pageantry. Is it not then

surprising, that even the tasteless and ignorant of our Protestant land should marvel at such a man as Thorwaldsen having drunk a health in Rome to its ancient gods ?

Would that you could understand that the miserably childish invention of a figure decked in artificial flowers, holding an infant in her arms, and surrounded by little bits of tin, or at best mock jewellery, which glitter in the light of small candles, has contributed, more than perhaps any other cause has ever done, to produce that coarse and revolting Deism which is almost universally professed by every man of intelligence in France—and by many even in Italy too—for they say you call THAT the Mother of God.

* * * * Such reflections were broken, cut shorter by a piercing cry which rang through the stillness of the moonlit Colosseum. I started up. Scarcely a minute before, I had seen Evelyn's white figure entering a gallery towards the front of the building ; there had not been a creature visible but ourselves, and leaving me to meditate, she had strolled on to see more. The idea of her having fallen down some of the dark passages or broken stairs naturally occurred ; I ran, as fast as I could, over broken benches and upturned teps, until at the entrance of one of the dormitories, half in

light and half in shade, I saw her lying, apparently insensible, in the support of a darker figure. A thrill of joy mingled with the terror of the moment. I felt sure her step-cousin had found her. But a very dark moustache, and almost frightfully dark eyes, the pupils of which were so much drawn down that the whites alone appeared to glare upon me in the gloom, at once showed me it was not the pure and intellectual face I had seen at Trollhättan : it rather reminded me of the pair I had seen at Prague ; it was that of a rather elderly, at least, a more than middle-aged man. "What is the matter, Evelyn, dearest ? What have you done ?" I cried to the stranger. Without a word, he quickly placed her in my support, and vanished.

"Who is that man, Evelyn ?" I asked, when by the convulsive grasp of her arms I knew she was conscious of what passed.

"A murderer !" she whispered ; and sunk back on the seat I had got her to.

Our old servant, Jacobo, now made his appearance ; he had waited below with the *rettura*, and he came, saying *un signor* had desired him to attend his ladies, one of whom was indisposed.

"What language did he speak ?" I asked.

"Italian, signora," said the man, with some

EVELYN.

significancy adding—“Many strangers arrive at Rome daily now. Can the signorina walk to the carriage?”

Evelyn rose up in answer, and taking my arm, while she trembled from head to foot, we terminated our first visit to the Colosseum.

As we emerged from the long, deep shadow which its walls cast around, I looked about with an undefined sense of dread; there was a tall, dark figure, dimly visible, standing moveless in the gloom; I drew Evelyn more rapidly on, and when we got into the carriage I saw that figure advance, but not issue from the shade until we had driven off. Evelyn never turned her head, never spoke, and only once, by a pressure of my hand, let me see that she was alive.

When we got to our apartments, she was pale as death, but perfectly calm and silent. She saw my anxious looks, and bending down her lovely head, till that statue-like face rested on my shoulder, she murmured,

“ It is come. I am sure he is here.”

“ It is come ?” I repeated ; “ how am I to comprehend that ?—who is here ? Your cousin Frank ? ”

“ Frank ! ” she uttered, almost with a scream, “ ah ! Heaven forbid ! ”

“ The man, then, you call a murderer ?”

“ Ah, no ! his unfortunate, less guilty associate.”

“ But now, at least, Evelyn, you must break this mystery ; you must defend yourself ; you must”—

“ Dear friend, no human being can say what I *must* do ; for the moment, I know not myself what I ought to do. Let us be calm, let us be patient ; no evil, that is to say, no danger, threatens me ; a few days, a few hours, may decide much for me, but at present I can only feel that the appearance of that man here, while it can betide no evil to me, betides much to—”

“ To what, Evelyn ? This pause is cruel.”

“ To the Roman government,” she replied ; “ I thought you might have understood that.”

I stared.

“ More and more am I mystified, Evelyn ; you, a mere girl, so delicate, so unsuited in mind, in person, in position, can you have attained to a knowledge of treasons, conspiracies ? What can you know of plots against a government ?”

“ Nothing,” she interrupted, holding up her hand with a look of indescribable repugnance ; “ oh ! nothing ! but, my dear friend, pardon

me," she cried, flinging herself into my arms, and pressing me to her bosom; "ah! I feel I wrong you by these half hints, this want of confidence, yet I cannot, dare not, trust even you. Wild, improbable, romantic it may seem; and so it is. Leave me, however, for a few days to myself, but in the meantime, pray, oh! pray for me!"

What could I do, but return the pressure of her arms?

We retired to our rooms: but when there, beneath our windows, we heard the hurrying tread of feet passing rapidly, or of idle feet loitering more slowly; and from moment to moment the cry went up—" *Viva Pio Nono solo!*—death to the black robes!"

The cardinals, but still more, the Jesuits, were the objects of popular animosity.

Poor Pio Nono! he had said to one of the amnestied conspirators, whom he received to his fatherly love, but who still declared that he *had* desired the secularization of the government, " What matters the garments that your rulers wear, so as they rule you as you wish?"

The garments mattered much; for they were types of a rule grown too antiquated for the Roman age. " The old religious institutions," on which it was founded, had been shaken

again and again, and again they had been, and again they yet may be, propped up; but there is now a wide-awake incredulity in the world as to their authority, which will never, in all probability, be laid fast asleep again. "Unbelief," said Pius IX., "is the sore that cankers the world."

It is the lever that is now placed beneath his throne,—a throne established and maintained by unresisting faith alone. Almost daily he came forth and said, "God has inspired me with a new reform," and the people shouted vivas, and demanded another; and the cardinals remonstrated, trembled, and believed that good Pio Nono was shaking their hats from their heads. But the character of the man they had chosen possessed elements of greatness never understood by them, nor by the world generally, because the character of the Pope was antagonistic to that of the sovereign.

* * * * *

We are in the church of Santa Maria Maggiore; the day is a high day, a grand *festa*. In this beautiful church we see again how Rome has typified the sublimity of her faith in her temples, although she has too commonly burlesqued it in her images, and in many of her memorials and ceremonies.

On this occasion the reformer, Pio Nono, was to appear in state, and “bless the people.” Crowds awaited his coming; the church was full, and the great piazza around it was thronged. There was a flourish of trumpets, and down from the Quirinal hill came the temporal sovereign, thundering along, on his arrival to be changed into the spiritual potentate. The trumpeters galloped in front, the six long-tailed black horses galloped next with the Papal carriage; the Papal guards galloped after and beside it.

And the dark-eyed, grave-countenanced nobles of Rome, in the service of their sovereign, stood just before us; the long aisle was lined with dark uniforms. And I thought of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as a shower of incense flew up over their tall heads; and up the aisle, thus marked out, came a long file of old cardinals in their splendid robes, and then, “borne on men’s shoulders, to be set in his place,” Pio Nono came on, robed in spangled white satin and gold, with all the insignia of his triple crown around him; a great fan of ostrich feathers shielding him; and—it was so in my eyes at least—a human god of man’s device revealed in him. He was borne upon the shoulder; his eyes cast closely down, his fingers making the mystic sign.

I gazed on his countenance, and I felt as I did so that it alone had interest for me ; all else was forgotten. A monk's control of feature, muscle, and expression, was there ; yet the impression it made on my mind was distinct, and has been abiding.

History will certainly judge of Pope Pius IX., and some of those who philosophize on history may yet say of him, "There was a good man spoiled," a great man too. Spoiled, because his soul, his judgment, heart, and understanding, were enwrapped in the trammels of the Popedom ; "the good that he would, he did not ; and the evil he would not; that he did."

And on now went the great gorgeous ceremonies, and the worship of God was lost, utterly lost, in what then appeared the worship of man ; for Pio Nono, the reforming Pope, was the idol which that day stood between God and men. And then the door of the crimson-hung balcony was thrown open, the velvet carpet was flung out, the guards alighted, and, standing beside their horses, turned down their swords ; the infantry dropped on one knee, the crowd fell on both ; the Pope appeared in the door-way, came forth, raised up his hands—a roar of cannon proclaimed that he had given his blessing, and from the top of the high tower a cloud of

incense rose up to the clear blue sky, as if to reveal the fact to Heaven.

And the indulgence was torn to pieces, and scattered down from the balcony to the crowd, who scrambled to get a bit.

Now it most unfortunately happened that in order to have a good view of the balcony, when we left the church, I had taken a seat, the only vacant one, behind an English gentleman and two equally stiff and sturdy youths. As soon as the chairs were taken, the man who hired them came to collect his three half-pence. But the British gentleman, who evidently appeared to think the whole proceedings a very wrong sort of affair, had no idea of paying his money until he had his money's worth, and in his own way signified a resolute intention not to pay till all was over. The man, saying aloud that the Inglesi must have their own way, left him alone till the crowd was dispersing, and the greatest bustle commencing.

"Come, quick!" cried Evelyn, who was two or three seats in advance; "let us get to the carriage before the crowd intervenes."

But the really "stiff Englishman" was now erect before me, with his two equally stiff youths, arguing very gravely, in unintelligible language, with the proprietor of the chairs, and

evidently seeming to think it an imposition to have to pay for a seat to witness an anti-Christian exhibition ; though why Protestant clergymen will go to such things, and why they will individually, and *in propriâ personâ*, receive the blessing of anti-Christ, is rather a cause of surprise to some persons.

This good man, however, proved a serious stumbling-block to me, in a literal sense ; for not being able to get him out of the way—his youths only staring at my precipitation—while he was intent on making out how many *baiocchi* were required, I got on the chair, thinking to step to another, and it, very naturally, overturned. In the consequent confusion I lost sight of Evelyn. I sought for her through the crowd, that was now moving and shifting in all directions ; but I believe the wisest plan would have been to have stood still, and let her or Jacobo find me. I never had the organ of locality, and mistook the place where we had left the carriage. The Piazza di Santa Maria Maggiore was nearly cleared, and I was alone. There was a curious sort of little omnibus waiting for chance passengers, with the most villainous-looking little conductor I ever beheld ; an imp-like young creature, not more than three feet and a half high, with a regular

Roman nose, the keen black eyes of the Jew, and a thin sharp face without a tinge of blood.

His whip was raised menacingly in his hand, with the reins almost equally high in the other, and he was screaming, in the shrillest, most agonizing tones that human lungs could send forth, to all who wished to go anywhere, for the love of our dear Lady, to make haste, or they would lose their seats.

I asked if he would take me to the Corso. He could not afford an answer, but the whip was lowered for an instant in the direction of the door. There was no one inside, and "the love of our dear Lady" seemed to be rather cold, for no one came, though the voice rang out its piteous entreaties for full twenty minutes; at last I got hold of the round black jacket that appeared above the white trowsers of this terrible youth, to remind him that I had yielded to his devout entreaties, and to the love of our Lady.

"*Aspetto*," cried he, in answer, with the look of one who would take pleasure in inflicting some still more deadly torment than that of waiting merely.

What he "expected," to judge by the countenance with which he uttered the only word he ever deigned to give me, "*aspetto!*" would

frighten any good creatures who had yielded to the love of the Blessed Virgin, and consigned themselves to his little omnibus.

At last his *aspetto* was rewarded, for two passengers came, and he set off; but the youth had no notion of going to the Corso; and it was only by the intervention of these passengers that I was brought at all near to it; I had then to get out and walk, thinking that if the coachmen and hackney drivers of Rome were, as was said, among the most discontented and revolutionary of the Roman populace, my young "*aspetto*" would be a clever assistant to a sanguinary mob.

But it may easily be supposed that all this time one subject of anxiety engrossed my thoughts, or at least dwelt in my mind, just as smiles may wreath the lip, while care racks the heart—Evelyn, she was not with me; and still the recollection of that horrid spectre of the Colosseum rose up before me. If he were to meet her alone, unprotected! Whenever the idea occurred, if any feet were ever winged, I believe mine became so. But the day was intensely hot. Imagine the beginning of July in Rome, and think that Evelyn emulated all that is believed of the Goths in making me go there at such a season; excitement heated

me still more ; and to this excited and heated aspect, which my fancy possibly magnified into something horrible, I imputed the fixed and rather anxious regards of a secular priest, a fine-looking man, with a countenance full of sweetness, whom I met on the Corso. His intent observation was so remarkable, that I believe it made me miss my way. I certainly passed the turn I should have taken, but before going far this was discovered : I turned round, and came almost against "a brother," who was close behind me. My sudden turn checked him, and after the natural apologetic bend, I looked up, and saw one who had stood beside the priest whose attention I had attracted.

I walked rapidly on, and coming to the turn I had missed, undesignedly cast a backward glance as I changed my direction, and saw that the brother was behind me. When I got some way up the street, there was another turn to be taken, and feeling not quite comfortable, I went into a little fruit-shop under pretext of asking my way ; when I came out, the brother was standing a few yards distant ; I hurried on. Our house was at the corner of the street, and when I got to the door, I saw the brother's face looking round at the angle of that we had left.

I knew that he saw me go in there; why he wished to see me do so, I knew not; but I began to think I should be seized and shut up in a nunnery.

With no little trepidation did I ask if the signorina had returned; and with no little relief did I hear that she had.

The fact was, Evelyn had waited for me as I had waited for her; and she seemed, poor girl, quite as alarmed, as anxious and uneasy as I had been: she was afraid I should have a headache, or die of malaria.

I told her my adventure with the priest and the brother. She made me describe the appearance of the first.

“Do not be uneasy,” she said; “I do not think there is any plot for shutting you up in a nunnery; I suspect that we have been seen together, and *some one* wants to find out where I am.”

“If I had thought so, I should not have come here till night,” I replied.

“On the contrary, dear friend, if the person I mean is here, I should be anxious to see him; I ought to do so.”

“Well, I am tired, heated, worried, and almost provoked to find you safe and well here, when”—

" You thought you should have some tragic termination to your adventures ? " she interrupted, smiling ; " I think you may make yourself easy on that point : and now let me bring you to your room, and repose yourself."

I did so, and sunk into one of the deepest sleeps that ever visited a tired frame, although I had thought that my adventure with the priests was to have been a personal one, and felt somehow a little mortified at being, in this also, only an adjunct.

That sleep was broken by a tap at the door ; it was then dark, and Evelyn came in, shading a lamp with her hand.

I started up.

" What is the matter now ? " I cried.

" Nothing ; at least not much ; but I must set out for Venice with the dawn of day."

She stood beside my bed, holding the lamp, still shaded by her hand to keep its light from my eyes ; her own, beaming with both pity and tenderness, looked supplicatingly at me. I saw from the expression of those eyes how the case was.

" Evelyn," I said, " I recollect that Geraldine thought you were calculated to make a good martyr. Take care you do not sacrifice your-

self on the pyre of your own affections ; an immolation which, as it cannot be really acceptable to God, can never do real good to his creatures."

" What do you mean ? "

" I mean that this expedition to Venice is not projected on your own account, but from the hope of serving, or, as you might think, saving, another, or others."

" You are right ; yet it may likewise, by its results, serve, or, temporally, save me too ; this issue is improbable ; but this is certain, it can do me no harm ; it may do another good, and at least it will relieve my mind, perhaps decide my fate. But what do you mean as to immolating myself on the pyre of my own affections ? "

" I simply mean to caution you against any proceedings likely to remove you further from the prospect of a union with your step-cousin." She covered her eyes with her hand.

" As I do with my bodily vision," she said, " so do I try to do with my mental, when that prospect occurs. It does not disturb my peace, for it comes like a holy gleam of life and love from a happier world ; but it might lead me into temptation, and if cherished, if realized, would lead to misery. My dear friend, what

I have told you before, I have only still to repeat. Your words do not touch my case, for you have never even guessed it ; and were you to hear it explained, you would be lost in astonishment at finding you had never suspected its nature. Believe me, it is only in the confessional I could get advice; for it is there only I could be at liberty to open my heart and state my circumstances."

" And if your cousin were a priest of the church which makes the secrets of the confessional sacred, would you apply to him now, Evelyn ? "

" Dear Frank ! never, never ! Do you not know already that I have fled from him because of this dreadful secret ? There ! hush—see what it is to talk ! I hate these interruptions ; I detest that word ‘secret ;’ I dislike that of silence ; but I must use them all : for at this moment silence is my duty, my safety, my hope ! Were I to meet the cousin now for whom you are so anxious, our unhappiness would, I fear, be certain ; for I am weak with him,—another being to what you see me with others. Now let us end a colloquy which closes, alas ! like many another. I must go to Venice to-morrow."

“ And I must go with you.”

“ You will? You will not now forsake me?”

Poor Evelyn burst into tears.

As soon as I could, I went to sleep again,
and dreamed of such odd things.

CHAPTER XIII.

VENICE.

WE had passed over the once romantic Appennines ; we had stopped at Bologna ; we had duly respected the memory of its famous university, which held a lamp to lighten the darkness of a part of “the dark ages ;” where galvanism was discovered, and that most unnatural rite, the dissection of the human body, was first practised, some time in the fourteenth century ; and we had gone on to “the City of the Dead”—Ferrara—once gay and glorious Ferrara ; and in going we thought of Tasso and Leonora, and the princes d’Este, and Olympia Morata, and other worthies ; but on returning we thought of the Austrians !

There was a great stir, or a half-suppressed, pent-up spirit of excitement all around us. There was leaven at work, and it was leavening the whole lump : we had seen it at work from the Baltic to the Tiber. And amidst this

general fermentation we arrived at Venice by the railway from Padua, and stopped at the Hôtel de la Grande Bretagne, where we had rooms looking on the Grand Canal, while by a back entrance we could in a few moments be on the Piazza di San Marco. Strange, romantic scene! Still, old Venice, do we catch a glimpse of you here. Most strangely beautiful! That gorgeous old cathedral—(though its huge campanile, in my opinion, were better away)—what a volume of deep memories, what spirit-dreams, do its dim, yet rich and gorgeous shades inspire!

In Mr. Dickens's "Pictures from Italy," this one appears to me a "portrait," and in his own style.

"A grand and dreamy structure of immense proportions; golden with old mosaics, redolent of perfumes, dim with the smoke of incense; costly in treasure of precious stone and metals, glittering through iron bars; holy with the bodies of deceased saints; rainbow-hued with windows of stained glass; dark with carved woods and coloured marbles; obscure in its vast heights and lengthened distances; shining with silver lamps, and winking lights—unreal, fantastic, solemn, inconceivable throughout."

And to steal into it in the cool, dim twilight hour, when all was light and life and gaiety without ; to leave the elegant, fluttering, plotting, or busy world just at its portal, and plunge back into another age, a gorgeous and a heavy one, when I crossed over that bit of brass which indicated the spot where Frederic Barbarossa knelt to old Pope Alexander—this was my ever-new delight.

The piazza without was thronged with the gay, the fair, the anxious, the trifling, or the busy ; Austrians and Italians, friends and foes, the subjects and rulers, there they were all engaged in eating ices or drinking coffee, or talking in whispers of what might be on the morrow. While that old place which doges and senators had filled, turned now into petty shops and resorts of modern idlers, might seem to bid them take no thought for the morrow, for the world passeth away, and the glory of it perisheth.

Yet did I truly love to plunge into that Oriental pile, which, in its vast and solemn impressiveness, appears in itself to confer a sort of sanctity upon the mind ; and there, alone, unseen, unobserved, to meditate, while the gathering shades of twilight were deepening its “dim religious light” to darkness.

On the evening of the second day of our renewed visit to Venice, I thus entered the cathedral of St. Mark, when the light of day was so rapidly retiring that I feared my stay must be proportionately curtailed. I hastened along its aisle with a step which involuntarily became as light and noiseless as it was quick. Every one knows the effect which a solemn scene has on producing a lightness of tread ; and when haste is added to that effect, we seem to tread on air, quite as naturally as any gliding heroine, or hero, can possibly do.

I believe that if I had worn a pair of creaking boots, the influence of the place would have carried me on without a sound ; I wanted to reach my favourite meditating-place, and the veneration that could not render my steps slow had a double influence in rendering them light. Thus, I glided on along the side aisle, until I came to that spot, which all who know the mysteriously beautiful fane of San Marco will remember ; a place of tombs, before which stand a row of mighty columns, and at the end of which is the side railing of the high altar.

There was a tomb there of some great or sainted one, I know not whose, but, on its utter darkness, in the small open recess, there gleamed a silver lamp, and its light shed a soft,

pale beam upon the cloistered aisle without it.

I checked my speed, and stopped beside one of these columns, for I saw the place I was hurrying to was already occupied. A tall, dark figure rested against the rails that enclosed the tomb. The arms, in that attitude which men when sleeping, or when sorrowful, usually adopt, were laid upon the railing, and the head bowed down upon them. There was something, even in the outline of the fine, powerful figure, that was intensely indicative of sorrow. Unwilling to disturb the sacredness of such emotion as I supposed the apparent visitor to the tomb to feel, I drew back, nearly behind the column, and thought I could as well meditate there as in my usual thinking-place. But in the very act of doing so I saw a second figure kneeling on the step before the altar-rails.

A thrill of undefined dread of evil chilled my heart, for surely that beautiful figure was Evelyn's! hers that rather tall, floating, and exquisitely graceful form, untutored by art, that knelt almost before me. One minute, and the kneeeling woman rose; she was in black, and a large veil shaded her face; but as she turned towards the tomb, with her back

rather in the direction I stood in, the light of the silver lamp fell full on a long shining tress of hair, which the dark veil did not conceal.

Evelyn ! my own dear Evelyn ! to rush forward to save her was my first impulse ; but to refrain from interrupting what might, as she hinted, be the crisis of her fate, was my second. I could not stir without being seen, so I stood silent and motionless, resolved to see the end.

When Evelyn rose, the man at the tomb lifted up his face, and I saw—was it the same—the very same I had seen at Trollhättan ? Surely now I am not mistaken ; the resemblance to Evelyn, but with the blue eyes and dark hair ; the same finely-cut features and remarkable lips as hers ; they were not like the morally severe ones I had seen in Sweden, however,—but the black locks clustering round the back of the head, the height of stature and elegance of figure were his, and I said, “It is the same, it is her cousin.” But I looked again, and there was a large wiry moustache, and prominent whiskers, and greater breadth of chest, and massiveness of form, and a totally un-English style of dress ; more of the Hungarian costume. And then I looked yet again, more keenly, at the countenance, and the tokens I read there were enough to

dispel the fancied similarity of feature to those of the pure spiritual face of the preacher I had seen in Evelyn's portrait of her step-cousin.

" But sadder still it was to trace
What once were feelings in that face ;
Time hath not yet the features fixed,
But brighter tints with evil mixed ;
And there are lines not always faded,
Which speak a mind not all degraded,
Even by the crimes through which it waded.
The common crowd but see the gloom
Of wayward deeds and fitting doom ;
The close observer can espy
A noble soul and lineage high ;
Alas ! though both bestowed in vain,
Which grief could change and time could stain.
It was no vulgar tenement
To which such lofty gifts were lent."

Passion, indeed, had set its wild and fiery brand upon that face, and yet the ruin of a noble soul might still be visible there, though youth had only just run its course ; for, while he probably had lived many years in a few, his age could not actually exceed thirty,—might be some years less.

And Evelyn stood face to face with this man in the solemn silence of the gloomy church ; but though he turned towards her when she rose, he did not look at her. The deep lids fell so low over his eyes, that you would think

they were shut; and, when they were half raised, the eyes looked on into the dim space beyond the pilasters where I stood, with an expression that made me shudder: it spoke the dreadful workings of a soul poised between evil and good. His companion did not speak, but her clear soft eye rested on the face before her, and with a movement of the hand, but no extension of the arm, she pointed to the spot she had knelt on, and returned to it. He advanced a step, and silently knelt beside her. There was no sound, no language, but doubtless their voices were heard between them, and each understood what the heart of the other was supposed to utter.

Was it a prayer, or a vow? I knew not. But before three minutes were over, they arose together; and Evelyn's form, looking taller, slighter, more ethereal, in the dim light, stood beside the manly and noble one of her strange companion, and her face, mild and pure as heavenly love could make it, looked up in perfect sweetness to his, and his eyes shrunk from it. It was strange to see him, so grand, so powerful, stand there, subdued and fearful, before a weak, faltering young girl. It was moral being ruling physical power.

And then Evelyn spoke in the accents of

her own much-loved land, and said, in tones that thrilled my heart at least, “Henry, the blood of Jesus Christ our Saviour cleanseth from all sin. God is always love; and His love follows not, nor wavers with, the opinion of men; even when the one is for ever lost, the other may be regained. But a great sin demands a great repentance. Methinks even here the angel-spirit of your once loved wife may be ministering unto us, whispering to me courage, to you repentance.”

An impatient, almost desperate motion of the man’s arm caused Evelyn to cease an allusion which his conscience could not bear.

“ You have suffered, you are suffering too much, Evelyn,” he said, in an English voice of almost perfect melody and despair combined; “ *she* would release you,—I have no right to bind you.”

“ But I will not release myself,” she calmly replied.

“ And Frank ?” he asked in a doubting tone, and stopped at the word.

“ Frank ! ah !” and a deep sigh burst from her heart ; “ you need not fear ! he thinks me perhaps capricious, perhaps wrong ; may believe even that I have changed my views of religion, and become what he might consider a Papist.

No matter. Perhaps he may yet know that I never was capricious in any respects. But, Henry, if you are uneasy on this point, if you want another pledge for my secrecy to him, know that I love him more than life, and that I can die rather than render his life miserable."

" You love him, Evelyn ? " in a voice of amaze.

" Of such love," she interrupted, waving her hand with a gesture almost of scorn—" of such love, neither you, nor those whose terrible passions have entangled you in a mesh of guilt and misery, know anything.

" But let us not waste time, if it be necessary that I hasten back to Rome. You have told me what is about to take place, the events that are everywhere preparing ; the circumstances in which you have been entangled, your own past part in the projected tragedy, are known to me ; but, Henry, in the face of all this, I ask you, in this solemn place, in the name of your murdered wife, and in that of her murdered father, to break the fatal chain which has bound you to a course of madness, if not of crime."

" It has become hateful to me," he murmured.

" But still you fear to break it, because you fear not God more than all. But tell me,"

added Evelyn, with the tone and air of one who had a right to command a reply,

“ Where is now that terrible woman, that splendid Pole, who has been primarily the cause of our misery ? ”

“ She has gone to Rome with — ; ” the name I must leave a blank : it has since been heard of.

“ Hah ! ” said Evelyn, “ they have left Hungary ; will she act her part in Rome too ? ”

“ Yes ; and if she were aware of our conference”—

“ I can guess the result to myself,” she interrupted, shuddering, and grasping the altar-rail as if for protection. “ I am, you know, physically weak and timid, but not morally so ; even *such* a death would be preferable to the violation of a vow sacred to the dead.”

Her voice, from intense emotion, afterwards sunk so low as to be audible only to the man beside her ; but with increased energy and a louder voice, she concluded a rather lengthy speech :

“ Now then, speak ; decide your part ; for mine, if God gives me strength to fulfil it, is decided. Will you do what I say ? ”

“ I will ! so help me God, I will,” he cried, in a voice hoarse with emotion and deep

resolve, “ if you will only allow me sufficient time, and maintain your promise till then. Oh, Evelyn, sublime and beautiful being ! you are Heaven’s minister of mercy to me ; if you have not your reward in this world, surely you shall have it in the life to come.”

“ YOU BELIEVE !” she cried, in a sort of ecstasy, extending her hand ; but drawing it back, as if it were too pure to touch that of the other, she clasped both hers on her breast, and with an upward glance, “ Many prayers,” she said, “ may yet be heard ! dear Frank may have *his* reward ; more unfortunate and weak, than determinately guilty, you may yet be ransomed from ruin. I will bear on ; I will be suspected, lamented over, even calumniated, if necessary ; you shall have time ; I will still be secret, and still keep from home, and from Frank. Farewell, until we meet at the appointed time and place, when you may be saved, and I shall be free.”

She passed away so rapidly, that only a slight movement of the air by her garments, told me she was gone.

The man stood still in the light of the tomb, in such a position as must have made my retreat observable, and my post of observation became by no means agreeable.

He was looking into the gloom of the great unlighted aisle. The expression of that gaze is one of my memory's never-to-be forgotten portraits ; briefly seen, indescribable, and indelible. Imagination may represent Cain, sending forth that gaze into the dimness of the unknown world on which he was condemned to wander forth.

But he turned ; I saw his face no more. With a groan that made his strong frame to heave and shiver, he dropped on the step where Evelyn had knelt ; his head fell on the railing. Home, friends, peace, youthful virtue, lost love, broken ties, a ruined life, a cast-away future, all sent forth that cry from the tumultuous chaos of his soul whereon the spirit of God was moving. The dim, silent aisle of San Marco echoed it faintly round, and that hollow moan, from a heart that shed forth its unseen tears of blood, dispelled my fear.

A penitent was there before God.

I fled, unseen, from the solemn place, and left the sinner alone with the sinner's friend.

That struggling spirit, now torn by the demon that was commanded to go forth, might at that moment be new-born to a life divine ; the grace of God, which bringeth salvation, might descend, even there, on that

heaving heart, and quicken the moral powers which were deadened by trespasses and sins.

I found Evelyn quietly laid on the sofa beneath a window looking on the Grand Canal. Her face was slightly coloured from hurry or excitement, but her strength appeared to be exhausted. She held her hand to me in silence; I took it, and sat on the footstool beside her.

"I must act the old lady, and leave to you the part of the young one," she said; "but really, now that my dim eyes (they were heavy with recent tears) can see you better, I believe you look as heated and tired as I can do. What have you been about now? running about for another peep into all the Venetian churches?"

"Nay, Evelyn, I have been only in that one where you have been."

She sprang straight up, like a galvanized body; the terror expressed on her countenance alarmed me.

"St. Mark's!"

"Yes, Evelyn; I did not go as a spy, yet I have been one. You know when we were here before I used to steal in there every evening to meditate; yesterday I was elsewhere; this evening it was getting late, and my entrance was hasty; I came suddenly into a position

which your rising from your knees prevented me from leaving, because I feared the possible effect of an interruption; or, at all events, causing an unnecessary alarm to your companion."

"Unnecessary!" she repeated, staring almost wildly in my face. "Tell me—oh! say—do you know that man? Have you seen him before? Do you know who he is?"

"Not the least; I know nothing of him. I never saw any one like him except at Trollhättan."

"Then all is right," she said, drawing a deep breath, and sinking back to her former position. "Yes, the likeness exists still; but it is that of the fallen angel to the unfallen. Have you then heard all that passed?"

"No. What I did hear was neither explicit nor connected enough for me to derive information from it. I could form suspicions, discern more mysteries, but I know nothing."

"Except this," she answered; "that I cannot, ought not to act otherwise than I try to do; that my mystery is compulsory, and my avoidance of poor Frank is necessary. Ah! I am glad you were in St. Mark's! for now, dear friend, you will henceforth acquit me."

"I have always done so, Evelyn."

"I believe it, or you would not have done for me what you have done, for it is Christ alone who does not forsake the fallen and guilty ; and you knew," said Evelyn, turning her clear eyes upon me, "you knew I was neither ; but now you will know that time and patience are my strongholds ; that, as the prophet said, my strength is to sit still."

"I know, dear girl, that you are acting on the noblest and purest dictates of a noble and pure heart," I answered ; "but I much fear that these constitute what by the world will be called weakness or romance, if not by the awful term of impropriety. I will tell you why I believe so. The world can neither understand nor appreciate conduct that diverges from its own recognised principles of action, because these recognised principles are consonant with our nature. The first law of our nature is to do good to self, to take care of self, to indulge the inclinations of self. An abnegation of self is therefore so obviously unnatural, that the world, which is self consolidated, can never either understand or appreciate it. It will call such abnegation either weakness, romance, or impropriety. And experience, that great schoolmaster, whose lessons are too numerous to practise in this life, shows us that we are

formed and fitted and trained to act in conformity with the world's laws ; because they are the laws of our own being, or of creatures who are partakers of the same being. For instance, when we from an ardent, perhaps unexplained, desire to do good to others, abnegate ourselves, our interests, our happiness, the object either fails, or becomes a source of pain to us : we are misinterpreted by the world, and ill-understood even by those to whom our sacrifice is offered. The one imputes our conduct to weakness ; the other, oppressed by a weight of obligation, may struggle from beneath it, by striving to believe that our romantic, enthusiastic disposition found its own gratification in the exertions we had made, or the self-denials we had inflicted ; they wish to think, and perhaps proceed to say, that these were voluntary, self-imposed, unasked for—perhaps, even, unrequired. Thus we almost always see that persons who make sacrifices for others to the extent of annihilating their own hopes, interests, or happiness, either bitterly regret their devotion, or become disappointed, misanthropic creatures. Thus also do we see how wise was the Psalmist, who said, ‘As long as thou doest good unto thyself, men will speak well of thee.’ For it is the men—and the women more especially—who

act on the principle of doing good unto themselves, who are the respectable, the esteemed, and the correct in the eyes of the world."

"Your doctrine is a chilling, yet I believe a true one," said Evelyn in reply to my long speech, and smiling at me for having so unaccountably made it such a worldly-wise one. "The Saviour, however, did not act upon it, nor inculcate it. But, dear friend, even this does not entirely meet my case. If you had heard *all* that passed in San Marco this evening, you would know that. You can see I am partly relieved; I have got some hope, but I must still wait. There are, I fear, violent commotions preparing. Persons who have been in Hungary and Bohemia are now here, and you can readily imagine that one who has compromised himself deeply may find difficulty in returning to a better path. If that separation between the destroyers and the destroyed could once be effected, I should take my lot in calmness, trusting that even to him I love a righteous God would sooner or later make my just dealing clear as the noon-day. But even in that case I should still be bound by an irrevocable vow to secrecy; and secrecy and sinfulness are almost synonymous to poor Frank."

"Love," I said, "is both the strength and

weakness of a woman's heart. In yours, poor child, its double power is exercised, to make weak and to make strong."

"And you," said Evelyn, looking earnestly at me, "you are surely its minister, for you have very often made me almost weak. But why sit we talking here? I forgot to tell you we must start for Padua by the last train. Jacobo has had orders; you have few preparations; let us be quick."

"I am almost ready, having kept myself under marching orders," I replied; and half an hour afterwards our gondola brought us to the Venetian railway, and in an hour, I think or two hours, I forgot which, we were at Padua.

And then we entered Ferrara; and Ferrara was no longer "the City of the Dead," for up to the piazza where we were there rode a gallant officer in the white uniform of *i Tedeschi*, and he made a speech, of the purport of which we knew nothing; but up dashed some pieces of artillery, and most ably seconded his argument. We were told that Ferrara was occupied by the Austrians.

But others cried "No, only its fortress is occupied by the Austrians." And all that I could make out was, that when the great chess-board of Europe was arranged by the

mighty players of the year, I think, 1815, there was a slight equivoque concerning the castle of Ferrara. The town was assigned to the Pope, and the fortress that guarded it was naturally enough believed to be so likewise ; but now a great grasping paw was stretched forth from Vienna, and poor Pio Nono, in the midst of his troubles, was startled by the words, “I take your castle with my knight.” The deed was done while the words were spoken ; and now Ferrara was on the *qui vive* ; its grass-grown streets were trodden ; there was a cry raised that might have awakened the spirit of Tasso, had it slept in his almost forgotten dungeon.

And on the whole way to Rome was that cry continued, “Death to the Austrians ! War with the usurpers ! Liberty and independence to Italy !”

But at Ferrara, when Evelyn received intelligence of what was passing, she clasped her hands, and cried,

“ Too late ! too late ! what day of the month is this ?”

“ The seventeenth of July,” I answered, staring at her anxious countenance.

“ Yes ; it was the seventeenth or eighteenth, he said ; we cannot then be in time.”

" For what ?"

" I wanted to see a person at Rome, before this day," she replied.

It never struck me who the " person " was, nor had I the least idea that the epithet referred to a personage who, in former times, was the greatest upon earth.

We re-entered the gates of Rome to find the Eternal City in a strange state of modern commotion. A conspiracy had been discovered; " a popular tragedy " was to have been enacted on the seventeenth of July, the day that the Austrians occupied Ferrara. How it all came to pass no one could tell. Who were its originators, what were its objects, who betrayed the design? " It was the cardinals, who wished to stop reform, to cast the guilt on the people and secure their power," cried some. " It was the Jesuits and their abettors," cried others. " It was the Austrians, who designed to occupy Rome as they had occupied Ferrara," said more. But there were also whispers that might scarcely be heard,— " It was the Romans ! to deceive and terrify their good Papa, and get him to organize the civic guard, despite the remonstrances of his cardinals."

Such were the *on dits* that buzzed around us on our arrival at our abode.

" And will he arm the citizens ?" asked Eve-

Iyn ; on hearing the latter statement, she had leaned her face down on her open hands ; but lifting it up quickly to our maître-d'hôtel, who, with all the volubility of a Roman reformer, was giving us a terrific account of the massacre that we had escaped, she asked with anxiety,

“ Will the Pope arm his subjects ? ”

“ Certamente, signorina,” was the decided reply. “ The people are all arming for the defence of the Pope.”

“ For his ruin ! ” she said in English, looking at me. “ Good-hearted and too unsuspecting man, he is arming his people against himself.”

“ Well, Evelyn, we have had a great escape ! You know I told you that I had heard, even in London, long ago, how the English, who chose to live at ‘ the seat of the Beast,’ thought they were very soon to be massacred.”

“ You remind me of the old fable,” said Evelyn, “ of the frightened frogs ; but believe me, it is not Protestantism that is anywhere in danger now.”

“ Well ; even if the blow were not aimed at Protestantism, a Protestant might be struck : I should like to be in a conspiracy, but I should not like to be killed.”

“ In such a conspiracy as this was,” Evelyn answered, “ the people who are to be killed are known beforehand ; you will find that

higher heads than yours or mine were the objects of vengeance."

And so it was, for Cardinal Lambruschini, who had been foremost in condemning the now-restored conspirators, had fled from the vengeance that threatened him: the people placed his name foremost among the denounced ones of those who were, as they said, to have caused the massacre of the seventeenth of July. All other unpopular names were included in this new conspiracy "against the people and the Pope." These names were plastered in the streets: the police and papal carbineers tried to tear them down, but "the Romans" prevented them.

We went out into the streets: what a scene they presented! The months of summer are favourable to conspiracies at Rome, because men who fly from the Campagna to sleep all the warm nights on the flags of the city, are quite disposed to accept any other work that is offered to them when that of the fields is suspended. But on the present occasion the usual history of conspiracies was said to be reversed. This Roman affair was not a physical force demonstration against the moral power of a government; nor a plot among the low for the destruction of the high: it was called A CONSPIRACY AGAINST THE PEOPLE: and its authors

were named by the people as persons in high places, and having authority ;—cardinals, ecclesiastics, officers, police, the governor of Rome, and all who were obnoxious as the enemies of the amnestied political offenders.

And then, on the square of St. Angelo, did we behold the mustering of the new civic guard—the European favourite of 1848—which all governments were to organize against themselves. There were assembled the princes, nobles, and populace of Rome, and all were ready for arms and action ; and there were the most peaceable Pope's ministers giving out rusty muskets, amid shouts of patriotism and papaism ; for they would all defend *il buono Papa* to their latest gasp. There was Prince Torlonia in command of a battalion, and Prince Corsini at the head of the genuine Romans—the Trasteverini, who, though they refuse alliance by marriage, customs, or language with the degenerate race of the modern city, united heart and hand in this regeneration of its old age. And there was Cicerouacchio in all his glory, proud of his influence both with people and princes : for he had been invited to a banquet given to him by the nobles, and he had had a gold snuff-box presented to him in recognition of his talents as a popular leader.

He was now Captain Angelo Brunetti ; but he was then also, and still is, Cicerouacchio, the man of the people, nominally acting under Prince Salviati.

And there we saw the newly-organized, but not yet uniformed, civic guard, marching *con amore* in their frock coats and buff bandeliers, a sabre by their sides, a musket pressed with all the energy of affection to their breasts ; a step, a look, so unlike those of the terrified, awkward, repentant recruits we see awakening, under the drill of a corporal, from the gay deceits which entangled them into the service of their country. The papal soldier was walking backward with his cane directed to their toes, while they, quite careless of treading upon his, marched on, making him jump a step or two backward, and keep his distance, as they clutched their newly-acquired old muskets in a manner that plainly said, “ No matter how we use our feet, you shall soon see how we use our arms.”

And then all through the streets and before every door were infant heroes, of four years old and upwards, patrolling with tin guns, and leather belts, and tiny swords, darting their weapons full in your face, and shouting with a terrible threat, “ *Viva Pio Nono!* ” And one, as I turned the corner of a street, popped his

tin musket quite in mine, and pulled the trigger just under my nose, crying, as the alternative for my life, “ *Viva Pio Nono solo!* death to the cardinals! death to the black robes! death to the Austrians! life to *Pio Nono* alone!”

“ *Viva Pio Nono solo!*” I cried, glad to escape death from a tin musket so easily.

Yes. Let him live alone! poor *Pio Nono*! The only man to live in Rome!—in solitary state to sit upon a throne which never had, nor can have, any to resemble it in this world; like the crowned skeleton of Charlemagne, the emblem of a past-away power, the representative of what once existed.

“ *Vira Pio Nono solo!*” I cried, in terror of the tin musket, and of the daring little Roman who aimed it, bolt upright, under my chin; “ if he lives, he will live well; if *you* pull down the throne,” I said, shaking my head at the four-year-old urchin, but only daring to speak English—“ if you pull down the throne which St. Peter and Constantine and Pepin built up, why it could not fall with a better man upon it; so *Viva Pio Nono solo!* you young Rienzi; I should like to send you to the infant school of the worthy Prince Sforza Cæsarini, which the Pope you fight for has permitted, where, I dare say, you would take much pleasure in singing a

pretty hymn to the tune of ‘See the conquering hero comes.’”

“ My dear ! ” cried Evelyn, “ what a long speech you have been making to the child.”

“ It is very wrong to go through a land without endéavouring to do some good in it,” I replied, “ especially in such perilous times.”

All through that night the tread of hurrying feet, the distant roar of a multitude—all the sounds that bespeak a popular commotion—kept us on the alert. We could not retire to rest, although quite convinced that that rest would be unbroken : for the Romans had gained all they for the present moment wanted—the decree for the organization of the national guard, published at night, and proclaimed amid a general illumination, and the removal of the ministers and officers who were the objects of enmity to their leaders. We had not the shadow of a fear, but still a degree of excitement, or wish to hear the “ *qui vive.*”—*Pio Nono solo*, or something else—kept us up ; for although the Romans are not the people to erect, or support, a pageant of an hour, in a popular tumult it is never easy to tell what change even a few minutes may bring forth.

We called up Jacobo to ask for tidings ; and were told that the noise passing under our windows arose from the hurrying to and fro of

hundreds of people in pursuit of a man who had been apparently on the popular or revolutionary side, but who was now suspected of a design to betray them ; of being nothing but a creature and spy of Austria, while he affected to be an Hungarian or Pole, and as inimical to that power as they could be.

When Jacobo withdrew, I observed that Evelyn was both pale and thoughtful.

“ Are you alarmed, Evelyn ? ”

“ No, not alarmed ; but do you recollect the man who so abruptly encountered me in the Colosseum, when I believe he would almost rather have met a spirit from another world, if he believed in such things ? ”

“ I did not know whether the meeting had been voluntary or involuntary ; but can you ask if I recollect him ? ”

“ Well, I fear—oh no ! not fear, it would be deceit to say that ; yet the thought is dreadful. I suspect *that* is the man they are now seeking. I do not know anything of it ; but this is one of those impressions of which Geraldine spoke that eventful night on Mount Vesuvius. I feel as if some crisis in my fate was approaching, just as she did then. Ah ! if good to me were to result from all this evil ! ”

“ How ? Evelyn, tell me this at least, at once, fully,—as you ought to do.”

“ Dear friend, do not be anxious, it is only a surmise ; but all I can tell you is, that the death of that man we met at the Colosseum might free me from a horrible embarrassment ; might save poor Henry—I mean the man you saw in St. Mark’s. Is it not dreadful to feel a thrill of joy while contemplating the issue of a sinful soul into eternity ? God forgive me, and grant repentance to him, and time and place for it too.”

Not more than half an hour after, Jacobo entered again, to say that the people had tracked the wretched man from place to place, and captured him at last : that they would have torn him to pieces, but the officers of the civic guard, who would allow no blood to be shed, had saved him, and that it was most likely he could prove himself not guilty, as he was a Roman.

“ And so,” said Evelyn, looking at me, “ if my impression be right, he assuredly will do. The stroke must be sudden or decided which he cannot evade. But let us now retire, the noise is over ; and to-morrow, *amica*, you shall be in the solitude you love, for I must be alone.”

CHAPTER XIV.

ROME.

THE day was too intensely, subduingly hot, to go out of doors. Even the fresh recruit of the new national guard, who was on duty nearly opposite our house, appeared oppressed by the weight of his musket; but never was duty more heartily performed, notwithstanding. Backwards and forwards, across a gateway, he marched, stopping only for a moment to give some intelligence to a group of fine-dressed ladies who came to receive it, and then resuming his march in double quick time, as if the safety of Rome depended on the number of turns he and his musket could take before that gate. But when the sun had slightly cooled its ardour, I got into a vettura, and, escorted by my old cavaliere, Jacopo, went out to some pet haunts, all old places familiar to English feet and English pens. The cave of Egeria, *par exemple*,—a very disappointing spot,

if it were not for its sweet, heart-improving memories. There I liked to sit alone in the cool of the summer eve, and taste the pure fountain of the nymph, and listen to lessons of wisdom in its murmur, forgetful that tumultuous, revolutionary Rome lay so near, with all its heaving hearts and plotting heads ; and many another sweet silent retreat can be found about the wonderful city, round which the history of the world revolves. One of these I made out that evening. It was a sweet, calm spot. Some of old Rome's ruins lay close by ; but, in a luxuriant wilderness of nature's beauties, a quiet dwelling intervened between me and the ruins to which I was making my way. Tall cypresses rose above the towering, graceful, random-growing vines, which flung their long slight arms here and there and everywhere, in a wild exuberance of vitality ; oranges and other beautiful plants grew beneath them, mingling an air of gladness with the gloom of the grave cypresses, which together produced a soothing, peaceful influence on the mind.

I had left the carriage and Jacobo, and walked over the grass outside the enclosure of this dwelling, when, just as I reached a side-door in its wall, it opened, and a monk came out. There was nothing strange in such a sight about Rome, and its aspect of religious

quiet had already told me that even Pope Pius might choose this scene for one of those evening walks which constituted his chief recreation. I came so unpremeditatedly across the doorway, that the startled monk looked up, and seeing a stranger, dropped his eyes again, and went on his quiet way. That thoughtful countenance and well-developed forehead, of which I had caught a sight; those downcast eyes,—had I not seen them before, in a stately garb, and in a more pompous scene? The church of Santa Maria Maggiore rose to my view, and the contrast between the calm, thoughtful, devout-looking monk, and the strange and mighty potentate, was very great. I went on to the ruins; and as I returned, a lay sister came out of the house, which I now saw was a convent, with a visitor whose head was enveloped in a large thick veil. The latter uttered my name; I quickened my steps, and met Evelyn.

“What have you been doing here?” I asked, perhaps a little angrily.

“Not coming to take the vows,” she answered, smiling. “Don’t alarm yourself, I have not the least desire to be a nun; I have only been telling a secret to a great and good man. Had I been able to give this information a few days sooner, it might have

done more good ; as it is, I have done no harm ; and I feel so much relieved, so much more happy."

She looked so. As she opened the folds of her black veil, I thought I never saw a face more beautifully peaceful. But recollecting a part of what had been said in St. Mark's at Venice, I asked her if she were not apprehensive of placing herself in danger by disclosing any part of the machinations of which she had so strangely acquired a knowledge.

Evelyn held up a finger, and looked at me as if she discovered my meaning.

"Are you trying to find out the nature of the disclosure I have been making ?" she asked, rather reprovingly.

"Indeed, I am not," I replied, a little offended. "I believe that to be both an unwise and an unsatisfactory practice. You know well that I have had reason enough to think that you might be exposed to danger, to revenge."

"Pardon me," she cried, and I verily feared she would have dropped on her knees to solicit it ; "do you know that I feel so excited, so happy, so full of hope, that I really spoke more in playfulness than earnest. Ah ! forgive me ; sympathize in my joy as you have done in my sorrow. There, we are at peace ; are we not ?"

“ What a child you are, Evelyn. Moved by a breath, and steadfast in a whirlwind ; the most yielding and the most unyielding of human creatures ; the weakest and strongest of women.”

“ You say right,” she answered ; “ and that is the reason that I fear to be with those I love the best. I can be strong on principle, but I am yielding from feeling. Now I will answer your question. Yes, I believe there would be danger to me, if what I have done were known to two persons : one of these I dread ; a wicked woman is a terrible creature—the most terrible ; yet it is not on that account, but altogether I have ~~an~~ impression that I should leave Rome ; that if I do not, something will occur. I have nothing to detain me now, for all I could do is done. I have merely conveyed the message with which I was intrusted, and I have greatly relieved my own mind by a communication which could only be made, in a manner satisfactory to my own conscience, to a priest. I am told to leave my cares, for the present, in other hands. Shall we then set out for the cool valleys of Switzerland, or, where you will ?”

“ To England ?”

“ No. My path is now clear ; I must still pursue it ; I have obtained help in my work

and am almost happy, yet my own position is not otherwise altered."

"I shall be glad to leave Rome," I said; "the heat is unbearable; it is unfashionable to be here; no English person is to be seen except that traveller who joined us the other day at the column of Trajan, and asked poor Jacobo, who can understand so much English, if it could not be washed a little."

"He must be the same who wanted to whitewash the old palaces of Venice," said Evelyn; and added, "Can you then start to-morrow?"

"I must see the catacombs first," I replied; "let it be the day after."

Ah! what deep regret does one day sooner, or one day later, too often produce!

And now deepened around us the sweet unwilight hour of an Italian evening,

"that clear obscure,
So softly dark, so darkly pure,
Which follows the decline of day,
As twilight melts beneath the moon away."

Such is the hour to muse amid the mighty wreck of what is called—and wherefore?—"the Eternal City." What relation has the modern supplement to the original? I see it not. But in that hour to sit among the ruins of the palace of the Cæsars! Yes; there the heart

may muse, the brain may think ; but woe be to the pen that writes.

And Evelyn, dear Evelyn, that evening walked with me, and sat with me among the ruins of the Cæsars' palace ; and we talked together, thought together ; and even there, and at that hour, I did not want to be alone.

We came back by the fountain of Trevi, that elaborate structure, where, if Corinna really did choose to meditate at moonlight, I cannot help thinking she found a noisy and very public retreat, although she was gratified by seeing the image of that uninteresting and good-for-nothing personage, Lord Oswald, reflected in the water.

The Trasteverini were around us, while we stood meditating there. The water issues from the base of Prince Corsini's palace, an enormous building, with which the works of the fountain are somewhat in character ; the water falling over great blocks of stone. The huge Neptune, car, horses, and Tritons, are all very fine ; but as we stood there we both recollect ed that Albert O'Donnell would have probably found the simple gush^{*} of a pearly stream, shadowed with a hawthorn bush, and looked into by a piece of red fox-glove, a thousand times more pleasing.

And then we stood one moment before the Pantheon, transformed by Michael Angelo from the service of Jupiter and all the gods to that of the Virgin and all the saints. Similarly well-meaning transformations are made in our own land by very good people.

And there grows up the Pantheon, out of that vile vegetable-market, with all lowliness and common-places around it. Wonderful work of mortal genius and of human hands ! Childe Harold is the best Cicerone in Rome ; many others have said the same ; but I have found him better even than my old Jacopo. I never knew his excellence until I read him here.

“ Simple, erect, severe, austere, sublime ;
Shrine of all saints, and temple of all gods,
From Jove to Jesus—spared and blessed by time,
Looking tranquillity, while falls or nods
Arch, empire, each thing round thee, and man plods
His way through thorns to ashes—glorious dome,
Shalt thou not last ? Time’s seythe and tyrants’ rods
Shiver upon thee—sanctuary and home
Of art and piety ! Pantheon, pride of Rome.”

“ Ah ! ” said Evelyn, “ there is all I dislike — ‘ From Jove to Jesus.’ These words open a fearful glimpse of error ; the mere substitution of one god for another.”

“ In this, at least,” I said, “ the Childe was

guiltless ; whoever substituted the sacred for the profane has obviously led to the error, and caused the irreverence. Thus we see among ourselves, even in trivial things, transitions to the sacred always tend to irreverence much more than to devotion. The misfortune here is that the Church of Rome engrafted itself on the site of Paganism. We may deplore the fact that eternal truth has become confused, in a degree, with its shadows ; for I believe that all religions are, and ever have been, the shadows of the true. This beautiful rotunda is not dedicated, however, to ‘Jesus,’ but to ‘Mary ;’ and perhaps in our Protestant judgments the Childe would have been unimpeached had he used her name as the successor of the gods in the mighty Pantheon of Rome.”

“ There is nothing,” said Evelyn, “ pains me more than to hear that name mentioned with slight or irreverence ; while there can be nothing more painful to any Christian mind than to hear the ever-blessed one of Jesus introduced as a substitute for that of Jove.”

As she spoke, we were at our abode, for we had only stopped for a moonlight glance at the Pantheon ; its exquisite interior lighted from the top, with the saints filling the niches of the gods, was already familiar to us : her few

remarks were afterwards remembered by me ; no one else would probably have been interested in them.

We had settled to set out for the catacombs at a very early hour ; to visit some places in the vicinity first, and to take them on our way back. The heat of the weather rendered this the most agreeable plan ; but like many other things over which irreversible destiny—call it Providence if you will—appears to preside, our little plans were altered, without the least reason for the alteration.

My head ached, and Evelyn was rather later than usual ; and when at last I entered her room to tell her that if we wished to set off on our last explorations before the sun came forth in its Italian ardour, we had no time to lose, I found her in her white dressing-robe, her gleaming hair floating over it at its full length, talking to a little black-eyed, sallow-checked Roman girl, of perhaps ten years old, who stood before her with hands clasped on her little breast, and such regards fastened upon Evelyn's face as a devout Italian bestows on the beautiful picture of Madonna.

She was a poor washerwoman's child, who had come to her on a common-place matter of business.

But this matter was arranged just as I en-

tered, and the black-eyed, sallow-cheeked child stood gazing upon her, and, in a low tone, which was full of feeling, murmured in a manner the most perfectly guileless,

“ La signorina è bella.”

Evelyn smiled an answer to the admiring eyes.

“ Bellissima !” she cried, in a grave ecstasy, on seeing that smile ; “ beautiful hair ! beautiful eyes ! ah ! the young lady is beautiful !”

“ My child,” said Evelyn, “ my hair and eyes are not beautiful in England.”

“ Oh ! they are beautiful in Rome !” cried the little creature, pressing her hands in rapture on her breast.

“ Is the young lady a stranger ?”

“ Yes, my dear, I am English,” Evelyn replied, and with a few kind words, passed into the adjoining closet to finish her toilet.

In consequence, however, of my telling her that I found the sun had risen too high for us to go out with comfort, she stood in the recess of the window, looking out of it : to our mutual surprise, the dark, rather sickly-looking little Italian followed, and planted herself opposite to her admired Inglese. Looking earnestly upon her lovely face, the child asked,

“ Does the signorina believe in God ?”

Evelyn started ; I did so too ; so unexpectedly

came the question. The child thought she did not comprehend it.

"The great God," she said, twittering her little fingers up towards the bright morning sky, "the great God who made all things—all these," and the fingers fluttered still more; "does the signorina believe in the good God?"

"Yes, undoubtedly, I believe in God," said Evelyn, "the great and good God who made and upholds all things."

The child looked relieved; she drew a deep breath, and said,

"That is good! the young lady is English, yet she believes in God."

There was a silence; the little inquisitor was not quite satisfied. Leaning forward, and looking still more anxious, she said,

"But, the good Saviour—the Redeemer? oh! he is good—he shed his blood for our sins—he died for sinners; does the beautiful lady believe in the good Saviour?"

The tears sprang into Evelyn's eyes.

"Dear child, yes," she said; "I trust I do, with all my heart, believe in the Saviour. He only is the Saviour of our souls, and his blood alone can atone for our sins. Yes, my dear child, I, too, believe in the good Saviour."

With an expression of rapture, the little

creature once more folded her small thin hands on her bosom ; but a deep shade of some doubt, some inquiry she longed to make, dwelt on her innocent face. She evidently could not bear to leave that doubt unsolved, and, once more leaning forward, she asked,

“ But, La Santa Madre ? does the beautiful lady believe in the Holy Mother ? ”

“ My child,” said Evelyn, “ I believe in the Blessed Virgin Mary ; that is, I believe that that holy woman was the mother of our dear Lord’s human nature. I honour and reverence her memory ; but I believe she was only a woman, holier and better than any other woman, but still only a mortal being, and therefore I cannot pray to her, or worship her, as I do our Father in Heaven, and Christ our Redeemer : and when I go to church, I cannot pray to her, but to God the Father only, through Jesus, our mediator and advocate.”

The child stood in thought for a minute or two before her, intently gazing on her countenance ; then bending forward, as if her doubts were satisfied, she raised “ the beautiful lady’s ” hand to her lips and kissed it, saying,

“ The signorina is good. She is English ; yet she believes in God ; she believes in the good Redeemer ; she goes to church ; she will not pray to La Santa Madre ; but the signo-

rina is good ;" and, kissing the fair hand again, she went away.

Evelyn was silent ; her face was averted ; when she looked round her eyes were full of tears.

" You will think me weak," she said ; " but it touches a lonely heart to find oneself, or one's spiritual state, thus the subject of such interest to a little stranger, never seen before, never probably to be seen again ; and that without assumption, without any attempt at teaching, without that borrowed phraseology which is so revolting from the lips of children. How seldom do we meet so much instruction, so much good and tender feeling among what are termed religiously brought-up children. Poor little thing ! she had formed her ideas of our religion by what she saw here. She had seen the English scoff at the ceremonies of her church, ridicule its worship, and profane even its temples ; and yet seeing them choose to live in a land whose religion they contemned and decried, she naturally believed they were atheists : how many a pious Romanist may be thus deceived, and led to believe that what is termed Protestantism is synonymous with infidelity."

" That is too true," I rejoined ; " for I have found, almost universally, among the simpler

and less instructed portion of the people in every Roman Catholic land where I have been, an absolute conviction that English Protestants do not believe either in God or Christ. The horror, therefore, with which an ignorant Roman Catholic looks upon our books, our Bibles, or our offers of conversion, is really grounded on that belief, and should be more tenderly regarded by us than it is. In our kingdom the case must be rather different ; still they consider that we have altered our Bible to suit our purposes, and that belief is what we should endeavour learnedly and logically to remove, instead of wasting time and words in invectives against their priests for prohibiting them to receive it.

“ Well, Evelyn, if you and I were of the Sacred College, we might make people wiser ; as it is, I think we should do better to get our breakfast ; and then, as they accuse the nation of traders of saying, mind our own business : remember this is our last day in Rome.”

“ Ah ! how solemn that word sounds ! I wish we were gone, yet I do not feel as if I were going.” And so Evelyn gathered up her hair into its circlet, and ended her simple toilet ; but when both it and our light breakfast were ended, another accident postponed our going out, so that it was afternoon before we started.

And when we were ready to set forth, and Evelyn appeared before me in her delicate white dress, her little cap-like bonnet, and large white veil, I looked at her with a sensation of surprise. The sea-shell pink of her soft rounded cheek was bright and beautiful, her soft brown eyes were full of hope and peace ; she looked so lovely, that I felt hers was the added loveliness of a mind relieved, a heart that had thrown off the weight of a secret burden, and known the joy of expansion and sympathy.

“ You look happy, Evelyn ? ”

“ I almost feel so ; happier, much happier, since last evening. I now know I am doing right ; doubt was my misery before. I am strengthened, as well as relieved, and with the help of God I can bear on. Come, *amica mia*, let us go to those catacombs, the graves of the first Roman martyrs for Christ ; then, tomorrow let us leave Rome, and go to some Waldensian valley, and hide our heads, as they once hid theirs, until this tyranny be overpast ; until the storm which shall convulse all Italy, Austria,—perhaps all Europe,—shall blow on, or blow over. For the exiles, or the emissaries, have been everywhere, and everywhere they have sown the seed which now is bearing fruit.”

“ Well, I hope Italy may be free.”

“ Even if *Pio Nono* fall ? ”

“ Not fall, but rise by a remove. If God indeed would ‘ inspire him with that new reform ’ which should abolish the most monstrous power that ever was exercised on this earth, Pius IX. would be the greatest and best of men. He would think it, of course, the deepest crime to do it himself ; with his own hand to pull down that worn-out fabric which other hands are shaking around him ; yet nobly, excellently would he act, if, freeing himself from the prejudices which have naturally fettered his mind and judgment, he could descend from that ungodly throne, which Christ never designed his ministers to fill, and close the great and fearful history of the Popes by voluntarily making himself the last.”

“ The heart,” said Evelyn with a sigh, “ becomes so oppressed with the prospect of the evil everywhere abounding, that I believe the most useful, as it certainly is the happiest course, is that of taking all the good that legibly appears before us, and passing over the reverse. For instance, here we see evil enough, frightful evil ;—but then, we have seen that sweet child. —At home, in England, we see evil enough,—a disunited clergy, unsettled formula ; scarcely a settled creed : after the lapse of eighteen hun-

dred years, the manner in which the initial rite of baptism is to be understood, still more the subject of controversy than it was at the era of the Reformation. It appears to me that it is this incertitude, this endless controversy, that more than any other cause drives persons, who long for rest, into the Church of Rome. There is a desire in most minds for that which is determinate; we see it in temporal matters, why should it not exercise an influence on spiritual? Some say the Bible, not the Church, must be our sole authority; but so says every sect, and every religious party, which opposes the Church of England: and, at all events, it appears lawful to wish that the rules and discipline of the Church were more authoritatively decided; that matters of faith and practice should no longer be neglected in strife for a dogma, or even a vestment; reverence lost in the independence of self-will; and no foundation laid for the spiritual and temporal good of the generations who are to succeed us, because from year to year, and age to age, the great and the good are occupied by the cavils and questions of the passing hour, temporarily disposed of to be again renewed."

"But if the decrees of a Church are infallible, Evelyn, its errors or mistakes must be received as truth."

“ You state a contradiction, my friend. However, I was not thinking of an infallible Church, but of a decided and authoritative ritual. It appears to me, that beneath the super-incumbent errors of the Church of Rome, truth lies at the foundation, and has many sincere worshippers, who, like that dear child, may be able to look on through the mists of time to the never-failing light of eternity ; and what I meant was, that it is well to know what a church does teach or believe.”

“ Well, I must tell you an idea of mine : do you know I think there is a curious and interesting parallel in the rise, decline, and fall of the Roman empire, and in those of the Papedom. The Cæsars have been followed by the Popes ; each have ruled the world ; each have dwindled down into an empty name ; each seen their once universal empire rent into two parts. The Popes were mightier potentates than the Cæsars, for they ruled spiritually and temporally, over mind and matter, bodies and souls ; stretched their sceptre from time to eternity. But I do not believe that the Papedom, that mighty excrecence on the once pure Church of Rome, will ever fall by a sudden crash, but rather that, like its wonderful parallel, it will melt away before the inroads of ‘ barbarians,’ ”

and, just as old temporal Rome did, die of a decline. And if it does so, and that you live to see it, remember, as dear old Aunt Patrick used to affirm, that what I say always comes true."

I spoke the last words rapidly, for we were passing out of the gate of San Sebastiano, and moving over the ancient Appian way, and by all its proud memorials of the mighty dead. With what different emotions did we retrace our road ! How little then did Evelyn, did I myself, think of the Popes or the Papedom, of the Romans or their empire, their sepulchral monuments, or actual life and commotions. The happiness of one individual heart is sometimes felt to over-value the fate of empires. Were the theory carried out, of course universal happiness would be the result.

And all along this Appian way, the stones which the Romans, whose names still thrill the soul, have reared to cover their dust, build indeed a tangible monument for the world to behold and marvel at, for the stones are still there ; but the dust, where is it ?

" The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now."

Neither does that of " the Lady of the Dead"—Metalla's enormous tower, wherin armed men held watch and ward, and built their battlements on the roof that covered the dead. But

is this wonderful, when the great fortress of Rome, the Castle of St. Angelo, was an emperor's tomb,—that of Hadrian? Yes; for the fortress of Pope Boniface was a woman's tomb; a building erected to cover the weakest thing on earth, a woman!—the weakest yet the strongest. A Pope converted it into a fortress; it is too beautiful for one, yet you start when told it was a tomb. And the fountains of Trevi, which we had been standing at the night before, were built by some of its masses, rifled by Urban, one of the Barberini, who emulated the barbarians among the relics of Rome.

The tomb of Cæcilia Metalla, as all the world is aware, has stood for just 2,000 years, erect in its massive yet elegant solidity. The sarcophagus, or flesh-consumer, it held, has been removed; its bones are not “in veneration,” its dust has gone, no one asks where. What now remains of “the Lady of the Dead?” We sum up all in words already spoken,

“This much we know—Metalla died,
The wealthiest Roman's wife—behold his love or
pride.”

The green ivy waves in its graceful abandonment over the top of the immense, scarcely ruined structure. We stood within it, and

gazed down into the vacant place of the tomb, and we thought of the inscription on the Christian monuments, taken from the gloomy, unhonoured sandpits of the Campagna,

“ In peace and in Christ.”

For the sake of this contrast only, do I touch on such a well-known subject.

And then, in dreams of the past and visions of the future, we turned our steps to that place of tombs which superstition has done all in her power to deprive of veneration, by casting around them her own disguising mantle of false legendary honour.

Here, just on the threshold of the catacombs, sacred to the memory of the first Roman saints of Christ, she shows us, in her sacristy, the stone which bears the impress of our blessed Lord’s foot when He met His recreant apostle, St. Peter, flying from the persecution of Caesar. St. Peter asked him, “ Domine, quò vadis ?” which in English, I believe, means, “ Lord, where goest thou ?” I do not know the Latin answer, so I give it in English. Our blessed Lord replied, “ I go to Rome to be crucified again.” Whercupon the conscience-stricken Apostle, whose failings Rome appears to delight in commemorating, turned back to the city, and met the death he is commonly believed to

have suffered. And the church of San Sebastiano is built over the tomb of the young Roman officer to whom it is dedicated; and they have added to the fact of his martyrdom for the faith of Christ, the needless legend of his three resurrections. Oh, Rome, Rome! wherefore sully thus the glory of thy early Christianity! Poor Sebastiano! when thy proud Roman heart was throbbing with the conflict between natural feeling and divine principle, which urged thee to count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, thy new-found Lord, had then any fellow-believer in the deep mystery of a crucified God whispered in thine ear the honours which the emancipated Church would pay to the memory of the soldier who died for Christ, how vain, how false, would have seemed the *predication!* Hadst thou sought for mortal honour, methinks thou wouldest have sought it with the legions of Rome. Yet here is thy name in veneration; here has been thy memory enshrined!

The catacombs and their monuments are a striking and almost legible index to the early church history of Rome; the latter, preserved in the Vatican, present one of the most interesting studies in which a lover of Christian antiquities can possibly engage.

The purity and fearlessness of the faith which animated the first Christians are symbolized by the constant use of the Cross—the Cross which was “to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks, foolishness,” and to the proud Romans, scorn; they, like St. Paul, gloried in the Cross of Christ; it marked the dresses of their grave-diggers, and abounded in the underground retreats, where, during the earlier ages of religious suffering, they found a hiding-place while yet alive, and a grave when dead.

“In peace and in .”

Such is the inscription of many a Roman Christian’s tomb.

And so we went into the church of San Sebastiano, and having rung a bell, a side door opened, and a Franciscan monk came forth, in his long brown frock, girt with a cord, and sandalled feet. He took a bunch of thin tapers in his hand, and giving us each one, held one himself, and opening a door, disclosed a flight of rough dark steps, down which he preceded us into the vast and singular chambers of the dead, which were also, in times of persecution, made a place of refuge for the living.

A more chilling receptacle for the one, a more frightful abode for the other, can scarcely be imagined.

The workers in these sandpits are supposed to have been among the earliest converts to Christianity, to have shown the retreats to their brethren, and to have been employed as fossors in excavating these tombs, in the ground originally opened for the purpose of procuring the tuffa, of which it is composed, a species of sandy volcanic rock used in making cement.

The immense extent of these caverns, reaching more than twenty miles around Rome, their utter darkness, and open graves, cut tier above tier in the crumbly rock; the long, intricate galleries, running in all directions, and literally honey-combed into cells for the dead, which in the sixteenth century were unhappily rifled of their bones to form reliques for all the sacristies of the Catholic world; some yet retaining the white pulverized remains of what were such; others, not distinguished by the martyr-palm, and therefore not "in veneration," still happily closed up; the very aspect of the dull, dark, sandy rock—fill the mind with a solemnity that might amount to horror, did not a voice from the past brighten the gloom by uttering the hopeful words, "All these died in faith;" "in peace, and in Christ."

It was here that the author of "Pictures from Italy" was struck with a thought that never

occurred to us ; as, indeed, few of such brilliant thoughts may be supposed to do ; but had I read that little book beforehand, I certainly might have shared the apprehension.

“ The narrow ways and openings, coupled with the dead and heavy air, soon blotted out in all of us any recollection of the way we had come ; and I could not help thinking ” (in such a solemn place I omit the exclamation), “ if in sudden madness he were to dash the torch out, or if he were to be seized with a fit, what should become of us ? ”

Untormented by such a speculation, and thinking only of what might have passed here seventeen or eighteen hundred years ago, we walked on, holding high our glimmering tapers, and sometimes looking well to our steps, on, through this strange mausoleum of the countless dead, until a faint light appeared, gleaming in one of those square compartments, which appear, undoubtedly, to have formed the first Christian churches of Rome—a place wherein the Epistles of Paul and Peter and John have been read “ to the beloved of God, called to be saints, whose faith was spoken of in all the world. That light attracted me on, while the monk was describing to Evelyn how a little pulverized bone, lying in an open grave, would be a useless object to carry away, because it was

not “in venerazione ;” in other words, was not believed to be a martyr’s bone. I looked back, and saw her white figure standing in the narrow subterranean passage ; the old monk, with his floating beard and unearthly aspect, stood before her, their thin tapers glimmering in the heavy lifeless air, and both looking like the representatives of two distinct states of existence ; and thinking how Albert O’Donnell would have rejoiced in such a picture; I hurried on to the little chamber, where modern superstition has added, alas ! some of her inventions to the relics of Christianity in the catacombs.

A light, I have said, was in that underground church where the first Christians of Rome had worshipped ; and on reaching the entrance I started, while a spasm at once of joy and terror struck to my very heart.

Another monk was there, holding another light ; another long brown beard was flowing over a loose brown frock, but his dull and meaningless eyes were fastened on a face different to, and yet like Evelyn’s. His companion stood absorbed in reflection within that interesting vault. The same severe, yet benignant countenance, the same thoughtful, yet vivid eyes ; the calm, intellectual brow ; the dark, thick hair around it—my eyes scanned all in a moment, the tall, graceful figure just in

the same position—yes, they were the same ; I was right now ; the same I had seen at Troll-hättan ! But behind me there was a cry, a cry of joy or anguish, I know not which—joy to excess perhaps is anguish—yet, could that impulse of her own heart have been stayed, I believe Evelyn would have turned, and, fleet as if the pursuers of the Christians of old tracked her steps, she would have plunged into the most fearful mazes of the catacombs, rather than have done what she did. That heart would have its way, and the cry rung strangely through the desolate vaults, though it syllabled a common and familiar name—

“Frank ! Frank ! Frank !” The white, spirit-like form shot past me ; the taper fell, and there the lovers met—in the tombs ! And there in that church of the slaughtered saints of old, and in the presence of the two staring, wondering old monks, Evelyn rested on the breast that loved her ; her long fair hair floated over it. Perhaps, for both, that moment held the essence of life’s cup of earthly joy.

Troubled dove, thou hast found thine ark !
Rest thee, rest thee, now in peace.

I turned to the monks, and asked if the bones of the saint, to whom modern superstition had seen fit to dedicate that subterranean church, were in venerazione ? They of course edified me

with a long story ; but I could see that, notwithstanding my edification, the singular rencontre of il Signor Inglese with la bella Signorina appeared to the long-bearded monks something more novel, if not more interesting, than any story they had yet recounted of the wonderful catacombs.

CHAPTER XV.

ROME.

I MUST leave a short blank. There are scenes and circumstances in life not sufficiently like those of a novel to be written or printed, yet which, in what is termed romance, so far surpass the incidents of a book, that the writer of them would be accused of exaggeration. I only pass, however, over a few hours—a very few.

We were in our apartments. “Frank” was in our sitting-room. Evelyn entered mine, where I had for some time been sitting alone, thinking of the approaching termination of my travelling adventures ; of Albert and Geraldine, and now of Evelyn and Frank ; lamenting that he had not a more hero-like name, yet recollecting it was an old favourite of mine ; and, in short, endeavouring to make myself as happy as any zealous match-maker, under the circumstances, ought to be.

Evelyn came in. I thought to see her radiant*

with happiness, looking in all the soft loveliness which deep and happy love imparts to woman's face. I saw Guido's portrait; I saw the fair, melancholy, mystic girl I had first seen in the Djurgard at Stockholm.

"Evelyn! dearest?"

She bent and kissed my cheek; her heart was too full at first for words; but her smile was so full of misery, so touchingly beautiful, so expressive of resignation and regret, of firmness conflicting with weakness—it spoke very distinctly to me; yet, how strange is the unaccountable perversity of our conduct at times!—it did not make me yield. An unusually strong sense of propriety had made me resolve to leave her and her new-found step-cousin to themselves. She came now to implore me to break that resolve, and to stay with her. Seldom have I had occasion to repent of firmness; but, ah! when practised, it has generally been just when it should not.

At length, after some discussion, the poor girl dropped on her knees, twined her arms about me, and cried,

"Tell me then you forgive me! Since now you give me up, tell me I am pardoned all the trouble, all the anxiety I have caused you! that you will not misinterpret, although you cannot understand me: that you will love me

still, and think with tenderness of the grateful heart that prays for you!"

"Evelyn, why this excitement?" I said, assuming that stoical coldness, which women can assume when their hearts are filled, even too full, with feeling — when they wish, but believe they ought not, to give way to its impulses. Ah! how seldom is such stoicism productive of anything but what hypocrisy deserves!

"I have nothing to pardon, but much to thank you for, my dear," I continued, with more sense than sensibility; "the interest I have felt in you, the affection you have inspired, can never be changed nor lessened. If I want a reward, it is that of seeing you at last safe in the protection of the man who loves you, and whom you love. Do not think that when my services can be useful, I will desert you. No; if you desire it, and that you will not be married here, I will with pleasure take you under my wing to England, although the noble countenance I have seen tells me you want no protection in travelling with him."

Her arms embraced me closer; she hid her face against me, and murmured "Hush, hush!" in the manner of one who feared to listen to the voice of the charmer, who charmed not wisely.

Then she lifted up her brown luminous eyes, gleaming through her disarranged and brilliant hair, and with their gaze of mingled terror and deep affection, said;

“ But this evening, this one evening, will you leave me to myself?”

“ Yes, dearest, I must do so; this nervousness is mere folly on your part. Were I to prevent an explanation between you and this step-cousin”—

“ Oh! fatal explanation!” cried Evelyn, interrupting me; “ prevent it, ah! dear, kind, friend prevent it! save me! save him!”

I was silent. Prudence and precaution intervened.

“ Evelyn, if I were to be the means of separating you from your friends, or detaining you from your country, you know well I could not forgive myself, and certainly I should be implicated”—

“ Ah! you shall never be implicated by me!” she interrupted, altering at once her manner, and rising up from her knees. “ I have hitherto taken good care of that, and yet will do so. Believe me, best of friends, there were many things I might have told you with advantage and great relief to myself, but I would never even ask your advice lest I might leave you room to blame yourself, or allow the

slightest cause for others to do so. I have been secret where I was bound by no promise : I will be so still : but ”—she paused—“ I am weak only with him ; I fear no one on earth but him. Ah ! dear, dear friend, leave me not alone with him this evening ! ”

She burst into tears, flung herself again on her knees, and clung to me as a lovely, fearful child clings to the neck of its mother. Who that had seen that beautiful form kneeling on the floor before me, with outstretched arms twined around me, the upraised, saint-like face, the appealing, half-terrified, yet loving eyes gazing into mine, with intense anxiety for the answer, but must have said the heart was adamant that could make that answer—no ? I promised to compromise the matter, and kissing the white forehead, said very sagely,

“ Poor child ! do not give way to feelings that may tend to misery.”

“ That is what you expose me to do.”

“ I do not understand you, Evelyn.”

“ No. You cannot ; but act as I want.”

“ Evelyn, listen to one who has had more experience than you have had.”

“ May Heaven forbid you to have the same ! ”

“ Mine may have been more common-place ; but, my love, it enables me to say to you what I believe you said, or at least something like

what you said, to Geraldine. Love once lost may render life a blank ; to make one human heart unhappy is a great crime. You love a man who loves you ; what deep, what thrilling love did that gloomy chamber of the catacombs bear witness to this day ? And he is worthy of your esteem, your respect as well as your love : a priest of your church, zealous, admired, beloved : you may be his wife to-morrow ; why not listen to him, accept him, repose your confidence and your heart in him ? ”

“ Because I dare not ; because solemn and sacred duties to heaven and on earth forbid me.”

“ And you will tell him so ? ”

“ No ; he must not, if I can help it, even suspect the cause from which I act. This is the reason I implore you to be with me. Once pressed to his heart, mine will burst forth ; he will be miserable, another will be lost, and I shall be a traitor to the dead and to the living. Oh ! had he kept away, even a little while ; or if we had left Rome to-day—but then he would have been here, and here he must not stay. Had he not come so soon,—in a short time no one will come. The rage for liberty is arousing itself everywhere ; the convulsion will spread ;—the nations will be drunken, but not with wine.”

I was really alarmed ; I thought agitation had fevered her brain.

" Evelyn, my dear," I said, in that soothing tone in which we involuntarily address persons in delirium, " lie on the sofa ; there, calm yourself now, love, you have been excited." She did as I desired, and then looking at me quite calmly, said,

" Surely you know this as well as I do, only that you are unaware of some particular movements in which parties known to me are engaged ; but you know that, with that noble aspiration to independence, that desire for freedom from foreign power, or anxiety to possess better civil institutions, which are felt in some countries, there is also a spirit of infidelity, and its usual companion, revolutionism, coming on hand-in-hand over Europe. Their work has begun in the very heart of the Catholic world ; it will go through the body. All Italy is ready to arise. Hungary and Bohemia are anxious to shake off the same yoke. There are emissaries everywhere going about, because wherever the political exiles of other lands have been, there have they scattered the principles for which they suffered. Do you not see that there are Hungarians and Austrians engaged here in exciting underhand the revolutionary spirit which will act upon their own government ? The

flame, once kindled, will everywhere meet fuel ; and thus I did not rave when I spoke just now. All our country people, methinks, will soon have to stay at home, and spend their spare money in appeasing the cry that is in their streets ; in reclaiming and elevating the miserable beings whose lot it is to live in degradation and die in crime ; in relieving the heavy doom of those whose best hope is to be so immersed in toiling for the bread that perisheth, that no time, nor thought, nor strength is left to desire that which endureth to everlasting life. Strife and blood may be kept from our land, because there, and there only, the people will want a leader. There, is a rich, well-satisfied aristocracy ; an affluent, busy middle class, whose interest would be impeded by popular commotion. England, to this, more than to any other human cause, will owe her safety ; but her selfishness may be her present safety and her future ruin. Assuredly, while religious cavils occupy one portion, and intense selfishness pervades another portion of her best and most well-meaning people, the cry of the poor reaches to God ; even while the destruction of the poor is his poverty ; for by the crimes and degradation to which it brings him, it has now indeed become hard for the poor man to enter the kingdom of Heaven.

“ But how I have talked ! ” she added, look-

ing round, as if she feared time had slipped away, and was lost without her perceiving it. "Dear Frank! all this time by himself? Will you not come? oh! do."

"In half an hour, Evelyn; see, I lay my watch there. Go now, like a good child; nothing very terrible can happen before I come."

She rose up, arranged her hair, bathed her face in cold water, and as she was leaving my room, looked back,—the backward look over the shoulder of Guido's Beatrice.

I sat watching the hand that moved round the dial-plate, neither slower nor quicker for human hopes or fears. The half-hour ran out; my punctuality was *en revanche* for my firmness; I entered the sitting-rooom; and—why was it? That "why" I could not answer; but I felt as if I had come too late, as if I had done wrong in not coming before. Evelyn was seated on a sofa, from which her companion had evidently only just arisen; for he was standing before her, one hand resting, in an attitude very common in full-length pictures, on a table beside him; his figure, of perfect grace and dignity, drawn up; his face pale, and his severe, yet beautiful countenance—the unfallen likeness of the man of St. Mark's—expressive of the surprise which seemed to have given a rigidity to each of its finely-cut, antique cameo-like fea-

tures. But the eyes, the eyes alone, speaking the repressed anxiety of a loving doubt, were directed to the lovely girl who sat before him, her face flushed .in a manner I had never seen it—the sea-shell pink was deepened almost too much ; yet Evelyn was more beautiful then—at least she now appears to me to have been so—than anything I ever beheld. What conflict of the hidden being had called up that flush, and deepened, while it brightened, the beauty of her soft, soul-expressing eyes ?

I knew nothing ; but when I entered, she smiled, and, placing one hand on the seat beside her, invited cousin Frank to resume it, by saying, as she looked at me, and, while her lip quivered with emotion, raising, as she concluded, one timid, imploring glance to the grave countenance before her,

“ Now, let us be happy together. Who ever lost an hour’s, a minute’s happiness wilfully, in this short, changeful life, and did not regret the irretrievable mistake ?”

The step-cousin dropped on the seat her delicate hand indicated, just like a body conveyed there by magnetic attraction, and not by an act of volition.

“ You are right,” he said with a sigh ; “ life is made up of moments ; we expect, from the cradle to the grave, to find the aggregate sum of

happiness which God wills us to enjoy, yet we go on neglecting the addition of its ciphers. Still the future, never the present.” His hand found its way to Evelyn’s, he gently pressed it, and added, as if my ears might hear the words, “Even ‘this moment ought to be a certain happiness to me.’”

“And to me,” she murmured; but her unnatural colour fell, and she dropped back, turning her eyes from those which dwelt so fondly upon her.

I hastened to change the discourse; we spoke about the catacombs; and the young clergyman was at home there, and told how nothing symbolical of the Virgin Mary, or of the honours paid to her, had been found in the monuments of the four first centuries.

Thus the evening wore away; but I saw that excitement and agitation were still at work, and that while we spoke of these things, the nearer interests of two living, palpitating, mortal hearts were at stake; yet I said to myself, Evelyn has gained a step this evening; if I had come earlier all would be right; by talking in this way, of intellectual and indifferent concerns, she will get over her apprehensiveness and nervous exaggeration. This young man is not at all an awful person, and I see no cause for her terrors.

But the hour had come when they, the two most interested, appeared the most disposed to retire. Such is usually the case; where hearts have been excited, perhaps overworked, they long for retirement.♦

I went into the adjoining room, for our sitting-rooms communicated, to bring a chamber lamp; I was aware that, the instant I had left the sofa, the nature of the conversation changed, because the voice of the principal speaker took another tone. I knew that cousin Frank was speaking of a subject nearer to his own heart even than that of the catacombs, and their anti-romanistic monuments. I had seen him gradually get over whatever shock he had received just as I came in, and he had sat in the corner of the sofa turned towards her, delighted with her agreement in his sentiments, but his eyes plainly telling that he found her more charming in her opening womanhood than he had done in the girlish days of their loving youth. Yet excitement led him to acquiesce in its natural result, and we were all ready to retire.

The voice went murmuring on while I was in the antechamber getting the lamp. It would not light; there never was so dilatory a lamp; it went out, and out, and still I heard that murmuring voice, whose tones could not

be mistaken. At last the lamp was lighted, and I reached the dividing door just as Evelyn, at length, with an effort that rendered her voice much more distinct than that she responded to, replied,

"I have always loved you, Frank ; you, you alone, of all the world."

She was clasped to his heart, but she felt not the embrace. Evelyn had fainted.

* * * * *

And she was laid upon her little simple bed, looking like that she had used in her happy girlhood, and he who had been her companion in that happy time knelt beside her now, and adored, not the creature, but the Creator. I could see he prayed, and strove to chasten the natural joy of the human heart with the pious gratitude of the Christian's soul : to "the Author and Giver of every good gift" he looked, and believed that in his long-loved Evelyn he had received one of these.

And then, as she lay there, so calm, so purely pale, so motionless, his lips bent down on her colourless cheek, and he murmured,

"My own ! my only beloved ! My God is better to me than all my fears !"

And the breath, and the touch that came upon her cheek, caused Evelyn's whole frame to quiver.

"Evelyn, dearest, look upon me ; let me see

your eyes ; let them speak to me," he whispered ; but the deep white eyelids still were closed, and except that quiver there was no sign of life.

He bent once more, and his lips met those beautiful ones of which I have often spoken, and from which, even still, the rich red hue of life had not withdrawn.

At that touch, as by an electric shock, Evelyn sprung up ; her arms, thrown almost wildly out, met and encircled the object dearest to her in life ; she kissed his brow, she clung to his breast with a sort of frantic energy and vehemence, unlike all I could have supposed her capable of ; then uttering some words, some names, unintelligible to me,—I know not if they were so to him,—she dropped back, pale, cold, and lifeless, as she had been before. .

" Come away," I said, putting my hand on the arm that hung over her, " leave her to me ; I know that she has suffered much, and this sudden reverse, this excitement, has been too overwhelming. To-morrow you shall see her, I trust, well, happy, and all you can wish."

" God grant it !" he replied ; and, standing up, with extended hands, he pronounced the benediction of the church, while I, too, bent to receive it, and felt a holy influence was around us.

Evelyn's eyes followed him as he left the room ; their expression was touching ; he looked back, stopped, and almost returned ; but the eyes closed again, and he went away.

About half an hour passed in total silence : Evelyn lay still as death, and I, hoping she was sleeping, sat quietly beside her.

Her voice murmuring the low familiar word, "amica," caused me to bend towards her. She took my hand, and pressing it between hers, drew it beneath her cheek : it was wet with tears.

" You are ill, Evelyn."

" No, oh, no ! but if God willed my death, I could almost venture to will it myself ; it would be wrong"— The tears fell faster, as they do when youth and sorrow speak of the death that is not yet about to terminate either.

" I am happier, much happier, now ; the very knowledge of possessing such love is a rich treasure for the heart to keep. And you, dear friend, nearly did all I wished you—saved me by coming when you did. Heaven bless you !"

" Let me help you to undress now, love, and to-morrow shall have its own cares and joys. We have had enough for one day."

" No, do not mind that. I want now to tell you something. There are two names I want

to intrust to your keeping. One is a real, the other an assumed one. You must never repeat either without my permission. That man we met in the Colosseum, his name is —.” She named one I have since heard of. “The man you saw at St. Mark’s, the fallen resemblance of dear Frank, he is called —. Now I want you to promise that, if at any time you should hear that the first of these is dead, and the last either dead or imprisoned, you will let me know.”

“ Certainly; you might hear this as probably as myself; but in a country place, especially as clergymen are not readers of the papers, it is possible I may be the first to give such tidings; though you are aware it is only by closely perusing the ‘foreign correspondence’ in ‘The Times,’ that I have any chance of seeing such names as those. And now, dearest, good night. Undress, and try to compose yourself to sleep.”

I stooped to press a farewell kiss on the cheek that was uppermost, but Evelyn intervened her hand:

“ Not there; let that be sacred!” she cried. Then throwing her arms about me, she strained me to her breast with no lack of fondness, though she would not let me take away the kiss that the step-cousin had left. “ Good

night!" she murmured with emphasis; "good night! May our God have you in his holy keeping, now and for ever."

* * * * *

And night spread her calming wings over excited heads and throbbing hearts, and I lay down to rest and fell asleep, murmuring to myself, "My journey from Stockholm to Rome shall end with Evelyn's marriage."

Our last thoughts at night, they say, are our first at morn; I do not think so. Our morning thoughts are usually much more worldly. But, in this instance, the saying came true; and with the same thought hovering over my brain I went to our saloon, where I knew Frank was waiting to join our breakfast.

His first inquiry of course was for his beloved; I told him that I had not seen, and was unwilling to disturb her; but seeing that a want was felt, even in my company, I proposed to go to her room. He at once thanked me, opened the door, and bowed me out with the greatest politeness. I knocked at her door, partly opened it, and seeing the blinds were not yet unclosed, concluded she had not risen, and was consequently unwell.

"Evelyn," I said gently, "he is come; he is waiting for you; anxious to know how you are at least."

There was no reply : I went over to the little bed, drew its white thin muslin curtains, and looked within : not even the indenture of Evelyn's light form was there, save just on the pillow, where her head had been placed outside its clothes on the night before.

I turned, and flung open the blinds. That frightful spasm of the heart, which terror causes, made me feel as if the hand of death were there : one moment I stood breathless ; the broad sun poured its light into the room. I looked round it ; there was nothing there ; under the table, under the bed ; I felt sure her body was somewhere ! No. I went to the table. How tranquil everything looked in poor Evelyn's room ! No strife, no struggle—whatever had been in her heart — had left external traces there. The lamp, which I had delayed so long to light the evening before, was the only thing that had died : it had burned out, and just below it lay an Italian Testament, open, with a black line drawn round the Saviour's words : “Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.”

And now came the wild rush of thought : What was I to do ?—whither to fly ?—to whom have recourse ?

The latter question was the easiest answered

—to her lover and relation ;—but how tell to him the dreadful event ? Trying to calm myself so as not too suddenly to shock him, I returned to the room. But judge of my astonishment when Frank received the intelligence that Evelyn was not to be found with much more surprise at my alarm than with any real alarm himself. I saw at once that he knew nothing, had not the least suspicion, of any grounds for my fears.

He thought it natural that, after an evening of excitement and indisposition, she had gone out in the cool of the morning for a walk ; and as Jacobo did not sleep in the house, and was not yet visible, he was sure he was in attendance upon her. He wanted to know where she might be most likely to go, and was ready to start to meet her.

I could scarcely repress my groans, so full of horror were the ideas that floated through my mind. The man she had encountered in the Colosseum, and he whom I had seen at Venice —the terrible woman with whose vengeance Evelyn had been threatened at Rome,—did he, who was thus calmly talking to me, know nothing of all this ? Nothing. Ought I to tell, or not ? As yet I dare not betray what I knew. Expecting her every moment to appear, he sat down with me to breakfast, and

indulged a lover's heart in talking of the beloved. He described their happy youth ; he spoke of her as being naturally the simplest, most confiding, and loving of human creatures ; hinted at his uneasiness during her absence from her home ; alluded with real admiration to the young baron ; and in the expansion of his heart expressed his regret that their aunt and guardian had sent her to friends in Germany, whom, he feared, were not, at least as regarded religion, the companions most suitable to his step-cousin, and his consequent dread lest she should become a Roman Catholic. And thus he talked calmly on, while my heart was sick with thoughts of horror which never entered his mind.

But when an hour had passed, and Evelyn did not appear, this calmness gave way ; we resolved to go out, thinking anything better than that dreadful quiescence. While I was getting my bonnet, Jacobo came with a letter, which he said *il Padre* of some place had given him. I did not hear who or where ; I saw only dear Evelyn's writing. So hideous had been my fears, that joy almost overwhelmed me ; she was not murdered, not carried off. I flew with it to her lover. We tore it open ; and saw the date "from the convent of ——." To me it

was a relief ; but to him—no, I cannot describe it ! Death, death, death, was trebly in that word ; that date was to him worse than the grave. His rigid limbs extended, he sank on a seat with a groan that made the ears to tingle.

But hope rose up in my heart, for I knew more than he knew.

“ Fly !” I cried, to the astonished Jacobo,— “ a carriage in an instant ! ”

Five minutes afterwards we were driving, as fast as a pair of black Roman steeds could carry us, to the sweetly-situated convent of —.

I wrote a few words on a card ; we were admitted to the parlour, and the abbess herself came to us. I demanded to see the newly-arrived guest,—I would not call her sister. A full half-hour elapsed ; we spent it in torture ; but I could well imagine that the poor girl was gathering strength to grant or refuse the request I had put in a form which I thought must succeed.

At last a man came in, saying the “ sister ” did not decline to see us, but it must be only at the grate. Presently to that fatal grate, which has so often parted youth and hope, and loveliness from the outer world, there came gliding on the spirit-like form of my dear, dear girl ; all robed, as it had been the evening

before, in perfect white, but over the shiny and still floating tresses, unarranged as they had been when she lay faint on her bed, hung the large white veil, and the face it partly shaded was as colourless.

She came on, meaning evidently to speak to us with the composure she had been trying to summon up. But with a cry which rang strangely through that sober place, so wild, so passionate, so despairing in its sound—the unfortunate young man sprang past me, and the agony that breathed forth in the reiterated name, “Evelyn, Evelyn, Evelyn!” was terrible, as, seizing the horrible bars in his hands, he would, I believe, have wrenched them from their place, had not the frenzy of excitement given way, and with a heart-rending groan he dropped almost insensible on a seat.

I had looked for a minute to him; when I turned to the grate again, Evelyn had retreated a step or two back; her eyes, that had been fixed on her lover with an expression no words could describe, then met mine. The power of speech was not hers at such a moment, and perhaps it was to indicate this, perhaps it was to indicate a time when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed and every one have praise of God, that her forefinger rose up nearly

to her lip, her soft, mournful eyes glanced up to Heaven; and Evelyn vanished, slowly, lingeringly, and silently from my sight.

Unable myself to utter a word, to stir from the spot I stood on, bewildered with grief and wonder, 'I saw her disappear. I stretched forth my arms, and a sense of the mysterious foreshadowing of events which we so often experience, oppressed my heart still more, as I saw before my actual waking sight the realization of the vision I had had upon my bed at night in Stockholm, when thus I had seen the fair, singular girl appear before me in the dreamy light of that northern sky.

Resolved to remain for some time where I was, I made Jacobo conduct poor Frank to his hotel, and I requested to see the confessor of the convent. He came to me almost directly: a simple old man, who appeared to have no very weighty burden on his mind, even from the aggregate amount of the deposits it bore.

The conversation I had with him was an indescribable relief to mine. I found that the dear unhappy girl had come there as a boarder, who wished for retirement and seclusion.

"My fear," I said, "is, that the influence which will now be exerted may lead her to take the irrevocable vows. We should think it wrong, if any of your church were in our houses, not to

do what we could to convince them of what we believe to be error. You must, if sincere believers in the truth of your own church, do the same, and try to convert my friend."

"It is right," said the priest, "to seek the salvation of souls. But the poor child appears to be well instructed, and to adhere firmly to her own convictions, while she shows no animosity or irreverence to the Church. The days of religious persecution, I believe, are at an end. The zeal of the Church is no more. See up there, the Jews of the Ghetto, who, in former times, were made to run races in the Corso instead of horses or asses at the carnival, are now as free as good Christians. You have had many a frightful story told in England of making people nuns and monks, and how they escaped over there to get a better living; but all that will be over now."

"I hope so, on all accounts; but still you will all think you do a good work by making my poor friend take the vows?"

"She must have a vocation," he answered; "and, to say truth, the dear child as yet appears to have none. I know her whole story," he added, looking at me significantly, "for we may hear secrets which others must not hear. Her soul is great, pure, and noble; but her mind

has been sorely burdened, and, without relief or direction, I believe that her imagination raised up its own spectres to add to real horrors. It is necessary that she should have a time of seclusion ; she will be at peace here, and a season of self-recollection may restore and calm her disquieted heart."

" You believe me very much," I said ; " but still I should like to have some pledge that my beloved friend shall never be urged either to change her religion or become a nun. She is very pliable."

The priest looked at me with a scrutinizing expression.

" You do not know then whose protection she has ?"

" Except that of God and her Saviour," I cried, " I know of no other."

The priest bowed his head and muttered some Latin words.

" It is the best ; but there are powers that rule under them. There is," he added, with a wave of his hand, " a priest at the Quirinal who could give you the pledge you desire."

" Oh ! thanks, ten thousand thanks ! You will then have a note conveyed for me ? Your Pope is a good, and, I believe, a noble-minded man ; but he has fallen on difficult times ; he has done much as a reformer and a liberalist ;

but he cannot do all without destroying the office he holds, annihilating the Popedom, together with its abuses ; in correcting the one, he is shaking the foundation of the other."

The old priest drew near to me with a singular sort of expression.

" Signora," he said, " there was once a good-hearted giant, to whom the people came and made loud complaints, that Vesuvius was a mighty evil in the land, and if it were not removed, there would be a terrible eruption. And the giant listened to the voice of the people, and said, ' I will go and see if I cannot stop its workings : ' and he put his shoulder to the base of the mountain; and it heaved, and overwhelmed the giant and the land."

And having spoken his parable, the old confessor took the little note I had written, made his bow, and went away.

Even there, with so many other thoughts in my head, so full of grief and perplexity as I was, I could not help thinking that poor *Pio Nono* stood between an iceberg and a volcano. The iceberg represented the ecclesiastical body, which opposed any reforms ; the volcano, the mass of the laity, who were clamorous for all.

Until I had received the more positive satisfaction I wished for, I resolved to leave our unhappy young clergyman to himself, knowing

that even in the agony of a wounded heart he could have the blessed relief of pouring out its fears and sorrows before the God he served. I had not, however, long to wait. The old confessor returned to tell me, that at a certain hour I must be at a certain place, in order to meet the “priest from the Quirinal,” who would listen to my requests.

I obeyed, and met the monk I had seen on the evening before mentioned. He appeared to me both cold and reserved; but having ascertained who I was, his reserve, with regard to my sweet friend, became much less.

We conversed a few minutes; he inquired my wishes concerning Evelyn; I openly expressed them; and knowing that to Frank it would be an inexpressible relief to be assured that her use of the English Bible and prayer-book, which we found she had taken with her, should never be animadverted upon, I named that subject also.

The monk was at first silent and cautious, but as he proceeded in his speech, his smile became benevolence itself, and his countenance and open brow beamed with its pure expansive reflection.

“The Church,” he said, “must not neglect to secure the salvation of a soul; but neither must its ministers presume to do so by either

artful or compulsory means. The days of tyranny are happily ended. The sweet child who has sought refuge in a religious asylum, from unheard-of circumstances of embarrassment, and cruel suffering of heart, martyrizing all that was dear to herself from the noblest, the most pious of motives, has already, we doubt not, offered a sacrifice more acceptable to God than any we could present by inducing her to take the vows of our holy Church.

" If her own convictions lead her to dissent from the communion of Christ's Church, we can only lament that she is a precious lamb going astray from the fold; but God and the Blessed Mary forbid that we should so ill repay the trust she has reposed in us, as to suffer the sanctity of her retreat to be invaded by aught that could cause either herself, or the good friends her poor heart still clings to, either annoyance or grief.

" Depart, then, in peace, and rest assured that the sweet child shall find a refuge, and not a prison, in her present calm abode. And if the fatal circumstances that forced her to fly there should change, she is not only free as the sunbeam that now enters this room, but will, if she require it, be protected and conveyed to her friends.

" Even *Pio Nono*," he added, with a pleas-

ing smile, “ owes her, they say, some gratitude, and this he will, doubtless, remember.”

“ And, he will remember his words, his promise too,” I replied—and, pardon me, ye who deem a pardon requisite—I knelt, and received a benediction.

I have often since talked of the blessing of Pope Pius IX., and have been asked how, when, and where I received it. But the truth was, I only received the blessing of the man whom the confessor called “ a priest who lives at the Quirinal.”

As I was hurrying, in great delight, away, a scrap of paper was put into my hand. It contained these words only, “ Make Frank leave Rome immediately. Evelyn.”

CHAPTER XVI.

ROME, ET CETERA.

SOME days have passed since the foregoing scene. Frank has set off for Jerusalem; I believe he intends to travel somewhere out of Europe for two years; he hopes to meet his brother in the East. I had a letter from Evelyn, written, she told me, in a sweet, pretty, simple room—a bower of flowers; she wrote calmly, sensibly, and distinctly. But Frank is now forced to believe in the truth of the hints formerly given him, that an aversion to matrimony, or some new views of a religious life, induced her avoidance of him, and her present seclusion. As for me, I am in Cloud-land.

I hoped that when he had left Rome, Evelyn might return to me. But I saw from her letter that she had resolved, as she said, "no longer to run the risk of implicating me in the mysteries of her fate;" fearing my entreaties, anxious that a mind now being soothed to peace, should not be again awakened to unavailing tumult, she would only see me for a

few minutes at the grate. I understood her, for I still knew her heart was as full of love and affection as ever.

The day after Frank left Rome for the East, I brought her the tidings. Evelyn leaned her fair head against the bars, and wept.

“Ah! he thinks to find him there!—And you too, beloved friend, you too must go,” she said, “then all on earth will be to me almost as all in heaven—distant and dear, but not hopeless!”

“I have a letter for you, Evelyn, from Stockholm,” I said; feeling my heart swell high, and knowing that grief and remonstrance were alike useless. She took it, opened it at the grate, and uttered a cry of delight.

“Ah! it is from Oscar, from Lilla; oh joy! joy! they are married!”

She ran the epistle over; it was full of tender happiness, grateful remembrance of her, and exquisite egotism of two loving hearts.

And standing at that dull iron grate, Evelyn read over the animated, glowing description of the Swedish wedding, and the Swedish lovers’ bliss, and pressed it to her tearful eyes. And there was the admired, the beloved Evelyn, living the still life of a convent; and the man, for whose love she had rejected that of the fine young baron, was now, in deeper sadness than we had left young Oscar in, posting his way to

the distant lands, with not even a remote hope to cheer the prospect of his return.

It was sad. My journey from Stockholm to Rome had not ended as I predicted. But perhaps another journey may yet put all to rights. On Evelyn's lovely brow a beam of hope appeared to mingle with the calm satisfaction of a mind at ease with itself. A peace which the world cannot take away is hers ; God will be her refuge and her strength.

“ Time, as it courses onward, still unrolls
The volume of concealment.”

Let us hope, and not be afraid, “ for verily there is a reward for the righteous, and doubtless there is a God who judgeth the earth.”

She leaned that beautiful face against the grate ; I kissed it through the bars, and with a heart-pang, which, when we first met in the Djurgard, I little anticipated experiencing, I parted from my beloved Evelyn.

* * * * *

It was but a sad and solitary journey I had over the Simplon ; the charming cascade, which forms the most exquisite lace-pattern I ever saw on the face of the smooth black rock, was really the only thing that engaged my attention.

In the streets of Geneva I came upon Albert and Geraldine O'Donnell ; they were

hastening home to purchase an estate in Ireland, and live, as poor Aunt Patrick pathetically declared, among pigs, potatoes, and popery, all the days of their lives.

The news I had to impart threw a cloud over their happiness ; to them Evelyn's choice was inexplicable ; but Albert declared that though he sometimes had thought her almost too like an angel to be a woman, she was too much of a real, natural, tender, and loving woman to be a nun. Yet how many nuns have been so too !

I travelled with them homeward. When we entered Paris the city was in commotion. We asked the cause, and were told that the people had adopted the English fashion, and wanted to eat some great dinner, and the king of the French would not let them eat their dinner ; and so the end of it was, as far as I could understand the matter, that the king of the French walked out of the Tuilleries, and the people of France walked in, and ate and drank, and smoked, and did whatever they pleased.

And they said there was a new revolution, and monarchy was no more, and republicanism was set up. And through it all we passed on our way immediately, and knew astonishingly little about it.

Now, as we were to diverge from the route

of the railway, we were put into a diligence—for Albert and Geraldine had already made a vow against wasting money on themselves, and therefore used that conveyance, which was afterwards to be put on the railway, and afterwards to be taken off again, without our being dislodged from our seats.

The corner seat, or *première place*, in this diligence, was secured, we were told, by a Monsieur Smeet, but the place remained empty. As it was beside me, and that I coveted it exceedingly, I listened with much interest to the repeated cries of clerks, and porters, and conducteur, for Monsieur Smeet ; but Monsieur Smeet was lost ; and we went on our way ; and when we were mounting on the railway, there was a cry again for Monsieur Smeet, but no one answered. In the dead of the night, Monsieur Smeet somehow turned up ; how the conducteur had caught him I know not, but he came laughing to the door of the vehicle, opened it, and attempted to push in an immense body. We all raised a clamour at the manner in which the said Monsieur Smeet was entering. Every voice was raised in French. One calling to him to take off his 'hat, another beseeching him not to enter, as he did, back forwards, to the certain destruction of our persons. But no answer came from the now

visible Monsieur Smeet. Backwards and backwards he stepped to the bottom of the long carriage, pushed by the laughing conducteur, and screamed to by every passenger—and plop! he went down, fortunately on the vacant spot, but with his long legs suspended over all the passengers' knees, and the feet sticking out at the open door.

We screamed to the conducteur, telling him the fact that Monsieur Smeet's legs were in a droll predicament, and endeavouring to resign them into his possession. The conducteur, convulsed with laughter, had got the feet, while Geraldine and I held the legs ; and not able to waste any more time, he lifted them up, much as would be done with a trussing fowl, crammed them back from the open door, shut it, and went to finish his laugh in his own seat. We had all been exclaiming to, and of, Monsieur Smeet, in French, and we never imagined that his dignified disregard of our exhortations proceeded from the fact of his not comprehending a word of the language.

But when peace was restored, we had auricular demonstration of Monsieur Smeet's origin, by hearing 'him, while drawing a very long breath, or rather exhaling one, ejaculate, as he wiped his forehead,

“ Ha—a—a—it's a rum concern altogether!”

He was, in fact, a good Derbyshire farmer, who could not speak the English tongue so as to be intelligible to “ears polite.” He answered to the appellation of Smith, John Smith, too, he told us; a name to travel with as an Englishman all over the world, yet ruthlessly squeezed into “Monsieur Smeet” by French tongues. He had come, like the rest of the world, to see Paris; he had a distant sort of connexion married there; but however it came to pass, after one month’s abode in that brilliant capital, poor Monsieur Smeet, alias John Smith, was returning to Derbyshire, relieved of more than three hundred pounds. Paris was, he said, the dearest place to live in he ever knew, and “they charged a power of money for seeing their sights.” He had been among “the English of Paris” all the time, who, as he could not understand what was going on, were exceedingly attentive to poor John Smith, who had attracted our attention also as Monsieur Smeet.

Such was his simple story; and now he informed us that he had taken his place “roight through to Lonnon;” but in these “furrin parts they were such a rum set, it was likely he might get lost again, if some of us, who understood their outlandish ways better, did not look

out for him a bit." We promised to do so, Albert having examined his bill of lading, and seen that he was regularly consigned, per land-and-water-steam, to London.

Nevertheless, when we were in our hotel, neither Monsieur Smeect nor Mr. Smith could be discovered, nor did we again see him.

Trembling for his fate, after all our other adventures, we landed in England, and verily, the first news we heard was, Mr. Smith has landed! Mr. Smith has escaped! Mr. Smith is safe!

"Why, Monsieur Smeect has come to excellent honour!" said Albert O'Donnell, opening his eyes at us.

Forth came our landlord, bowing, congratulating us on our escape from massacre.

"Mr. Smith has landed!" was his information.

"Oh! he has got safe, has he?" said Albert, taking care of his portfolio all the time; "why, what makes his safe arrival so famous?"

"He has escaped the revolution, Sir; saved his neck, Sir. They would have beheaded him, undoubtedly; Sir; guillotined him like Louis the Sixteenth."

"Oh! he had been in the row in Paris, then?"

" Row ! Bless me, Sir ! don't you come from Paris, Sir ? He ! in the row, Sir ?"

" Why, who on earth is this Mr. Smith you talk of ?"

" Louis Philippe, Sir, the King of the French."

" Oh, oh ! oh !" said Albert, quaintly looking round the circle ; " here is another Monsieur Smeet gone astray, who has left more than three hundred pounds behind him in Paris !"

The story is too true to appear so.

Before the windows of our hotel went a sooty errand-boy, with hands pushed into his pockets, roaring out most joyously,

" Oh ! were I queen of France,
Or still better, pope of Rome ! "

But what he should do if either transformation were effected, he did not stop on his way to let us know ; and perhaps wiser heads would be equally puzzled to tell.

CONCLUSION.

LIVERPOOL.

AHIMÉ! in Liverpool! this *ultima thule!* which term, I believe, means the most important, most commercial, most delightful portion of the known world. The natives say Liverpool is so, and I take the saying on credit, just as I do the assertion I have heard them make, that its men are human camels, and itself the concentration of one monster idea—money.

But, in Liverpool, musing over the past, nearly hopeless for my poor Evelyn's future, "The Times" enters my viewless room, which is haunted by visions of the stone house at Strass, the vine-embowered cottage at Meran, the platform on the house-top opposite Vesuvius, the islands of Mälaren, the rocks and trees and views of Djurgarden; and here comes "The Times" to tell me there is still a world,—an outward and visible world,—although I neither see nor know anything of it.

And what a hurly-burly world ! Three parts of a year have not long ended since I left Evelyn in her convent ; since Geraldine, her husband, Mr. Smith—not Monsieur Smeet—and myself, landed simultaneously on these shores. Oh ! vain politicians, how your calculations are frustrated ! Oh ! wise travellers, and learned authors, and celebrated writers, how strange look now in print your speculations and views regarding all the states, and kingdoms, and countries of Europe ! Eighteen hundred and forty-eight is just now striking their dirge and its own. That topsy-turvy year has reversed your political prédications,—some of our own also. How did we prognosticate in Denmark, for that rising kingdom and liberated people ! Now it is made the prey of unneighbourly neighbours, the scene of a lamentable war. I wish I could go and help thee, poor Denmark !—for all kings and queens like to stay quiet just now; thine ally, King Oscar, perhaps, among them. Sweden is now almost the only land at rest.

The fire of revolution was long smouldering in the heart of the Catholic-world ; like the fire of Vesuvius, it burst forth on the side before it shot up from the crater. France was the eruption on the side, but now the heart itself is at work. The flame spread

everywhere, but the sparks flew from the centre to kindle it.

Pope Pius the Ninth was judged of, written of, prophesied of, too soon. God, it was said, had given the reformer to Italy; but lo! man has taken him away. There was wisdom as well as wit in that pasquinade before quoted :

“ Pio, no, no,
Ma stai ;
Vedremmo come tu governerai.”

He could not unite the discordant elements which must compose the character of such a sovereign as the people required, and of such a Pope as the Church insists on.

Just as I commenced to write these pages, there was an exile—a mighty man—meanly disguised, meanly carried off from the Quirinal, and escorted by the English wife of the Bavarian (or Austrian) minister beyond the limits of the States of the Church.

Ah! *Pio Nono*, wherefore have you fled from the power of the children whose audacity you fostered,—your petted sons, who grew too strong for you? Your own words are verified—“The hour of benediction is past;” your blessing could no longer disperse the crowds from your palace.

But why have you not maintained your own character? Why have you not stood as the

Christian priest, even if the sovereign were to be sacrificed? Why did you not, like the great first Cæsar, fold your Roman mantle round you, and fall with dignity at the foot of the statue to which you were self-sacrificed? A statue, and no more; for the life has long ago departed from that gigantic fiction which was called St. Peter's throne. You kindled the torch, and fled from the burning. You have hearkened to false advice; will you now hearken to it again; solicit the hands that carried you away to lift you back to your anomalous throne; and then suffer *i Tedeschi* to subjugate Rome?

But Evelyn! ah! our old confessor's parable is expounded. The benevolent giant has upset the volcano, and overwhelmed himself; and now, amid the shock of the earthquake which has heaved the soil of Europe, when her own words were fulfilled, and "the nations were drunken, but not with wine;" while kings were in perplexity, thrones tottering, crowns resigning, and human blood was flowing, one little convent chamber occupied my anxieties, one simple woman's fate engrossed my care.

Frank is, I conclude, still in the distant East, compelled to "dree his weird:" would that I could put Fortunatus's cap on his head! The friend whose protection was engaged for

our dear girl can protect himself no longer. The march of infidelity will go on ; what may be the fate of the numerous religious institutions of Italy ? The bulwarks of superstition once broken through, pure religion will stand within a very narrow compass. That great, old, sacred, ecclesiastic institution, which has stood a thousand years, a wonderful anomaly among nations, and for long a ruler of their destinies, has now finished its old decrepit age. There will, henceforth, be always a dead Pope unburied in Rome.*

But that peaceful convent, with its cypress shades, and myrtle boughs, and orange blossoms ——. They bring me another paper, my sole medium of communication now with this wild world of ours ; “The state of the Continent” meets my eyes ; I read, “The Hungarians have shot —, who betrayed them.” Brave and noble people, they have had a traitor among them : but shall we have Hungarian exiles now among us, and sympathize with them as we do with the Poles ? and Böhemians, Italians, and Irish and French ? What a mongrel race we English shall become. And shall we pension all the people who would be independent

* The deceased pontiff is not buried till his successor's death. Should Pius IX. be restored by force of arms, the Papedom will be still virtually dead in its powers, and in the affections and will of the Roman people.

of Austria, Russia, England—rebels or refugees ? and so was I running on, when memory awoke.— That name, was it not allied to Evelyn's history ? I flew to my portfolio ; compared the two—yes, it was the same.

“ Evelyn, I come to you ! the man of the Colosseum has closed his guilty course ; may not he of San Marco be saved ? I will fly. *Pio Nono*, in recompense of the advice I have here given him, though every one but a physician gives advice for nothing, may once more, at *Mola da Gaeta*, give me his blessing.

“ Evelyn, my wings are spreading ; we shall meet.” * * * * *

Thus had I been writing, my head bowed down, my back to the light, when a sunbeam entered my room, darted across my eyes,— Evelyn was in my arms !

There was a cry on my part, a laugh of delight on hers. Opening her lovely arms, and closing them again ; weeping, laughing, like a restored and radiant child, she clasped me, released me, kissed me, gazed at me with eyes full of smiles and tears ; and I sat like a stone, stupefied, petrified ;—I might have been a pillar of salt.

Yet I was all the time indistinctly sensible that a tall, dark, graceful figure stood behind the light which Evelyn shed around me ; that

a grave, rather mournful face, was looking at us admiringly. Was it Frank ? How altered ! so thin, so pale, with a look of deep happiness in his clear blue eyes, but such a shade of care on his once calm, unworldly-looking brow. He pressed his hand upon it, as if to shut it from my gaze, and with a heavy sigh, dropped upon a seat. I saw his hat was covered with crape.

Evelyn left me, ran to him, stood behind the chair ; her arm hung round his neck, her beautiful cheek was pressed to his. She spoke in whispers, but he answered aloud,

“ Your voice, my blessed love, is to my troubled heart what the harp of David was to Saul. I thought I could command myself better, but the sight of your friend recalls thoughts that overpower me. I will leave you with her ; I have some matters to arrange before we sail.” He pressed my hand warmly between his, and went away.

“ You are married, Evelyn ?” I exclaimed.

“ Yes ! without your leave or presence ;” and while her roseate colour, which had returned to its natural pinky brightness, rose rather than fell, her joined hands dropped with an air of mock penitence on her bosom, as she added, looking down like an accused child, “ It was not my fault—indeed it was not altogether my fault.”

I could have laughed at another time, but now I was too much bewildered at this great change in my dear mystic girl, to think much of her playfulness. “Tell me now all this story you have so long kept secret,” I exclaimed; “unravel at last your mysteries; my curiosity has been suspended long enough; I almost believe you have been provoking it, merely making a mystery to give interest to a journey.”

“Hush! dear friend,” said Evelyn, relapsing into gravity; and then, dropping the raised finger, she took hold of her black crape dress, and looked in my face.

“I see you are in mourning, and death has released you; now then I claim your promise that I should know all.”

“You deserve to do so,” she answered, “and I can with greater ease fulfil a promise which Frank now knows I have made, and must therefore keep, because it is not his intention to reside in England, for some years at least. He expects a colonial appointment in the Church, and we are merely passing through without seeing any one but yourself, in order to pay a short visit to Geraldine in Ireland; we then go to Sweden, where we shall remain until our destination is fixed. The shock which my husband’s mind has received, and the family circumstances which are connected with my

recent mysteries, would render a return to his former residence for the present painful. He has purposely left us alone, for no allusion to these unhappy circumstances can be made in his presence. He will not return till night, when he will bring me to the Adelphi, in order that we may sail by the early packet."

"Come then," I said, stirring up the fire, "let us make ourselves quite comfortable; here is an easy chair, there is a sofa. Now you talk, and I will listen."

"There is only one part of my story," said Evelyn, "that can surprise you; the rest, I am sure, has dropped out by little and little, and, just as the reader does in a novel, by putting things together, and collecting the scattered gleams of light, you have known already the nature of the secret I was burdened with; however, one matter you have not even suspected.—that man I encountered in the Colosseum, the amnestied of Pope Pius"—

"Ah! I have read in the paper that he was shot by the patriots of Hungary."

Evelyn turned pale, and looked down in silence.

"That man," she added, "was my husband's uncle, at least by marriage. I told you often that family circumstances which had occurred many years before, and with the full particulars of

which I had only recently been made acquainted, were involved in those which led to my unhappiness and embarrassment. One of these was the marriage of an aunt of Frank's, the younger sister of his guardian, with an Italian, whom she met while travelling with friends in his country some years after the continent was opened to British tourists. Young, high-spirited, and anxious to escape from a step-mother, she married a man of whom she knew nothing. Of her future fate I believe her friends never received any correct information.

"Her husband, finally, was one of those old conspirators of Rome whose sentence of death was changed into banishment for life. He became, like many others, a wandering adventurer, living by unlawful gains, sowing the seeds of sedition, and deriving a profit from their fruits.

"It is now some years ago since my step-aunt began to talk of her 'sister the countess,' a sister whom I had never even heard of until I went to live with her, for her marriage had displeased her family, and separated her from all her friends.

"However, it appears that Frank's guardian had received letters, written in the name of that sister, which represented her husband as holding a post of honour in Hungary under the Austrian

government, by which he had been ennobled for his services. These letters had detailed the dangers they had escaped in Rome on account of their Protestantism, to which her husband had become a zealous convert. They drew an affecting picture of their sufferings and loss of property, and were the means of obtaining from the deluded lady to whom they were addressed those occasional supplies of money, of which, with all his new-blown honours, it appeared the banished count stood not a little in need. It was to this sister ‘the countess’ that I was sent, as I told you when we were at Göttenburg, at the time when Frank’s expected return from Oxford made his aunt anxious to get the step-cousin out of his way. Some friends were going to Vienna, and she sent me with them to her sister’s address, without even waiting for an answer with the consent of the countess to receive me. The friends who took me under their care wandered about among the watering-places of Germany; and even Bertha’s letters, who was my principal inducement to undertake this expedition, missed me in consequence.

“ When I reached Vienna, my poor aunt, you know, was dying; had she been able to speak to me, I am sure I should at once have rather returned, even alone, to England, than have

remained there. There was much in her looks that terrified me, and the whole aspect of the place told me that her sister had been grossly deceived. I expected to find Henry there, but"—

"Henry?" I interrupted; "the man of San Marco?"

"Surely, surely, you have known that that man was Henry,—Frank's dear and only brother?"

"Well! go on, I will not interrupt."

"I told you he had gone to Austria: his intention, he had said, was to enter the military service of that country, and his brother always believed the intention had been fulfilled. Unhappily, he, too, went direct to his aunt, the countess; but that bad man, her husband, easily contrived to keep them apart. Henry had money to some amount, and his uncle soon fastened his fangs upon him, and never released them until the ruin, which he could only too easily effect, was accomplished. Henry was plunged into the pleasures and dissipations of a gay and corrupt capital; his brain was kept in a whirl; a fatal passion engrossed his heart, and obliterated every recollection of the past, every other hope for the future.

"Its object was a woman nearly twelve years older than himself; a splendid, magnifi-

cent creature ;—you saw her at Prague. She was a native of unhappy Poland, had been, though then very young, one of the heroines of Warsaw, and had fought on horseback, and in the open field, along with the brave patriots of her country. Dark, wild, and wayward were her passions ; even her tender mercies were cruel ; if she loved that infatuated young man, it was with a selfish, jealous, and cruel passion ; a passion that would sacrifice all to itself, nothing to the beloved.

“ Such was the woman who commanded the will, the affections, the principles, and conduct of poor dear Frank’s brother ; such the woman he offered, and ardently desired, to marry. I know not if the prospect of being the young Englishman’s wife flattered her ambition, or was congenial to her taste ; the former it might do, the latter I think could not be the case.

“ Henry’s uncle, however, was at that time deeply immersed in the secret conspiracies carrying on in Italy, and in the designs that were projecting in Hungary ; the command of property and influence in the latter country, through the medium of his nephew, now appeared to him likely to be obtained.

“ When she was in England, sweet Bertha had been as much Henry’s friend as I was Frank’s. I believe it was chiefly owing

to her, and to her descriptions, that he conceived the idea of entering the Hungarian army in the service of Austria, of which, you recollect, her father was an old officer. His uncle determined that he should marry Bertha, although his faith was pledged to the beautiful Pole. But with her he knew he should have little difficulty ; a close political *liaison* existed between them. In all his schemes, views, and actions, she bore her part, and was at once his instrument and instigator. It was easy to show her the advantages that could be made to accrue to them both from the marriage of their victim with the daughter, the only child, of a rich old man ; she was herself aware that her power over the husband need not necessarily be relinquished. She was a subtle, but a far bolder conspirator than he. Henry also was now becoming impoverished, and making this her plea, she graciously resigned her claims, advising him to seek a union with the girl whose dowry would be the means of opening to him a glorious career. But the facility with which her lover, one of whose chief failings was a weakness in yielding to others, accepted the project she proposed, filled her with hidden rage ; his early and gentle love was not quite forgotten ; she saw it ; and I believe that even then her proud, far-seeing eyes looked on into

the future she marked out for him. Poor Bertha's consent was easily obtained ; but her old father resisted ; finally, won by his beloved child, he gave his consent also, but made it a condition that Henry should separate from his uncle and former associates, and never bring them to the house where he was to reside with his bride and himself. As there was no resource, the conditions were accepted ; perhaps at that moment the separation was by no means painful to the accepted suitor. But they excited the hatred and determined the councils of the two conspirators ; yet they bowed to the decision made against them, and convinced Henry that whatever promoted his interests most was most pleasing to them.

“ Bertha was married about two months when I came to Vienna, and, as you recollect I told you, I went almost immediately to her house, accompanied by her old governess, who had been watching for my arrival.

“ Unfortunately, Henry passed me on the road. Had I come even a day sooner, my arrival might have detained him from Vienna ; and as I always had influence over him, both before and after that time, perhaps some of the fatal results of that visit might have been averted.

“ Bertha was a sweet-disposed, gentle, young

creature, without pretension to any superiority of mind or person : the latter was plain ; the characteristic of the former was intense devotion. She was a devout Roman Catholic ; her English mother had zealously embraced her husband's religion, and, strange to say; Bertha's residence of four years in England, from her twelfth to her sixteenth year, instead of inclining her to Protestantism, had made her return with greater zest to the practices and discipline of her own Church, from which, in a country place, where there was not, I believe, a single Roman Catholic, she had been separated, while my aunts, pious evangelical members of the Church of England, zealously laboured to impress her with their own sentiments.

“ Yet though Bertha was a devout and sincere believer, she married a man whom she knew not only was not of her religion, the religion she considered the only true one, but who had really no faith at all ; even its outward form and confession he had renounced since he had lived among the infidel liberals who now abound everywhere and in all denominations. Ah ! it is well that, as we sin in this life, so are we punished ; but the scourge becomes indeed a scorpion when held in the hands that ought not to use it, the hands of those for whom we sinned !

"To win her beloved husband—for he was fondly, tenderly beloved—to religion, was poor Bertha's most anxious aim; but she had weakened or lost any influence she might have had in doing so by marrying him . . . he had none. He believed that, in her own way, the world and the flesh had then been as irreconcileable with her who professed religion, as they could be with him who professed none; and her solicitude afterwards only wearied or irritated him.

"The house was in a remote, though romantic situation; its loneliness had no attractions for him after the excitements of the capital; my arrival was so long delayed, that he made it the pretext of a visit to Vienna. We passed on the road, and he went on there, to return to his old career and his former associates.

"His uncle and his coadjutor had calculated every contingency. Finding that the announcement of my arrival did not bring him back, his father-in-law wrote, remonstrating at his absence, for his sweet wife would only deplore it. Henry, in answer, declared that I could no longer continue to lead a life of imprisonment, denied even the privilege of having the society of his friends and relatives at the house; and that if they must not come to him, it was only just that he should be at liberty to go to them.

Bertha thought this was only reasonable, and the old man's reluctant acquiescence was at length obtained : Henry returned with his uncle and the Countess Pole, who was introduced as that man's niece, the daughter of an elder sister. She was still Countess Zarina ; her lofty manner, her pale, cold aspect, well supported a fine-sounding title. None of us ever suspected that she had been Henry's betrothed ; that she still was the object of a fatal passion, which overruled his heart, his mind, his will, enthralled and subjugated the whole being of a man so many years younger, and in strength of mind so much her inferior. To Bertha the Pole appeared to attach herself as if to an innocent, engaging child, yet with a deference and outward submissiveness that very soon revolted me from her, because I felt it was outward only. Before long, the young wife, unknown to herself, was a mere cipher in her house ; and her old father, without being able to say how it was done, felt his power rapidly passing from him.

" But the unhappy old man came to a knowledge of the treasonable practices that were carrying on even under his own roof, and in which his son-in-law was becoming deeply engaged. Although an Hungarian, he was not a partaker in the desire, then becoming more and more popular, for the separation of that country

from Austria. He had lived all his long life in the service of the latter, and at its eleventh hour had no disposition to forsake it. He knew that the seeds of revolution, or rather of anarchy, were everywhere sown by political refugees—from Italy here, by those from Austria elsewhere—and with the tenacity of age he would cling to an error, or an abuse, rather than adopt a novelty, or risk a change. Some correspondence fell in his hands which deeply implicated the Italian. He summoned both him and his nephew to his presence, and, with the brief decision of an old soldier, told the uncle that if he did not directly leave the country under a pledge to return no more, he would deliver him over to the police; and informed the nephew that his intention was to alter the settlement of his property, so as to deprive him of all power over it in the event of his death. The announcement alarmed Henry much more than it did the practised Italian; the latter was prepared for all emergencies; he bowed acquiescence; thanked the old man for his clemency, accepted the alternative, but requested leave for his niece to remain with Bertha until she could depart more leisurely than his hasty removal would now admit of. Too happy to have so quickly arranged the matter, the host readily consented that the Countess Zarina should still

enjoy his hospitality. The Italian took a friendly leave of every one, and departed ; the beautiful Pole remained, and was kinder than ever to Bertha.

“ Two days passed ; the third morning the old man was dead !

“ His daughter’s custom was to bring his morning cup of coffee to his bedside. On that morning the fall of the salver on the floor, and the terrible shriek that rang from the apartment, brought first Zarina, and then myself, to the old man’s room. He was not then dead, but quite incapable of speech or motion ; it looked like paralysis, only the pain appeared to have been greater. Dear Bertha lay senseless on the floor. Beside him stood his usual drink, which he took every night. It was all gone. Oh ! my friend, what changes does time make in our feelings. I can tell you this with calmness now.

“ I knew so little then of the evil that is in the world, that a suspicion as to his death not being natural never entered my mind. How could it enter Bertha’s, when there was no one in the house interested in her father’s death but her husband ? Had the Italian been there, perhaps she might have suspected ; as it was, I feel sure she did not. We all imputed his death to agitation resulting from the intelligence he had

received concerning his son-in-law. The idea was suggested in the most natural manner by Zarina. When the servants were calling for their young master, who had gone out for an early stroll, she laid her hand on my arm and said pathetically,

“‘ Ah ! do not let the son see this cruel sight. His conscience will reproach him too much for having angered the old man. She must not lose father and husband at once.’

“ I thought she was right ; and while Bertha was lying senseless by her father, whose last moment approached, I was flying to meet Henry, and break to him the intelligence, when she reiterated her charge to me not to reproach him too much, and to keep him from the scene.

“ But never shall I forget the horror of Henry’s face when I told him, as calmly as I could, that his father-in-law had been seized with paralysis, and had just expired. Words could not describe it. But just as a tortured mind was on the verge of breaking forth, Zarina walked calmly into the room, and looked him steadily in the face. He dropped on a chair with a deep groan ; and believing that her strong mind would have more power in calming his than my own agitated one could have, I left them together, and hastened back to dear agonized Bertha.

"From that time Henry evidently became a desperate man. A dark yet fiery gloom overhung his once open countenance and noble features ; he avoided the society of his wife, absented himself frequently, and when at home shrunk from her as if with horror. The cause of this alienation the unhappy Bertha began at last to suspect arose from the influence of the Pole. She was mistaken ; but the suspicion, once admitted, easily took root. The settlement of her fortune remained unaltered ; it was to have been executed on the very day of her father's death ; but now, if Bertha died without children, it was left at her husband's disposal.

"Seeing that the poor girl was becoming more and more anxious and unhappy, I longed to bring her back to England. Henry, soon after I came to his house, had exacted a promise from me not to mention to his aunt or brother any circumstances relating to the affairs of himself or his uncle. He easily persuaded me that it would be dishonourable to do so while I was enjoying their confidence and residing under their roof. Consequently, when I wrote to Frank, for whom his brother had always entertained a respect and affection which now was mingled with terror, I was unable to state any

reason for my wish to bring Bertha to England, and his aunt looked upon it merely as an excuse for my own hasty return. Frank therefore, not deeming that the time he looked forward to was yet come, advised me to remain where I was a little longer. But before I had got his answer, I had obtained Bertha's joyful consent, who, saying I had more influence with Henry than she had, eagerly entreated me to use it in order to win him to accompany us there.

"I sought an opportunity to speak to him alone, and I nearly prevailed. The memories of childhood and youth, of innocence, love, and peace, were not quite lost. I pleaded hard for himself; I had already learned much; I dimly saw the abyss that was before him; that his happiness, his peace, his safety, would be compromised, and that he, as a foreigner, was merely sacrificing to the interested designs of restless, impoverished, outcast adventurers, all that might with honour be sacrificed to even the ideal glory of a patriot.

"Tears were in his eyes while I pleaded for home, for Frank, for Bertha, for all that once had been dear to him, even in his wild and wayward youth. But the manner in which he compressed my hand in his told me that he could not, if he would, get free. His soul

appeared to be tortured by conflicting emotions; yet the gloom of sullen apathy that had lately hung over him gave way, he caught me, poor fellow, in his arms, and with a burst of emotion he cried,

“‘Evelyn, will you, can you, be my friend?’

“‘Yes, Henry, to the last,’ was my reply; and these words, had I taken no subsequent vow, would have bound me to the course I afterwards pursued. I took his arm while the moment of softening lasted, and hurried him into the presence of his wife. She looked at him—with a cry of joy flung herself into his arms, saying aloud, ‘We go to England.’

“For the first time since her father’s death he held her to his breast; but he suddenly pushed her back, and stood with a listening and anxious air. Intensity of hearing was one of his characteristics, and though I heard nothing, I saw by the turn of his eye towards one of the passages so numerous between the apartments, that he apprehended there was a listener, or, through the aperture left to admit the light, a witness of this scene.

“The next day his demeanour was totally changed; his gloom was gone, but an air of reckless levity far more disagreeably supplied its place. My eyes at last were opened; I saw we

were indeed watched, and that what we did, others undid.

" The beautiful Polish countess was with us most part of the day, and more amiable than usual. I had always been reserved with her ; instinct generally guides my friendship ; but her great, powerful dark eyes—not keen, but powerful—seemed to look through my heart, and to read its thoughts and feelings whether I would or not. To Bertha she was submissive in all things ; she spoke with pride, yet pathos, of the misfortunes she endured for her country ; gloried in the poverty of a proscribed exile, and was not ashamed to confess herself a dependant on the bounty of the more wealthy.

" She was present that day when, to our astonishment, Henry burst into a merry attack upon us for wanting to carry him off a prisoner to England ; and ended by seriously advising his wife to leave him behind, and go there with me. Frank's letter had not then arrived, and I should not have opposed the plan. Bertha looked at him ; she did not say a word, but her eyes, brimful of tears, were earnestly riveted on his. He started up and left the room. Then the tears rolled down her colourless cheeks.

" The eyes I mentioned regarded her like those of the basilisk.

“‘And why weep you for this?’ said the proud Pole, holding back her head. ‘Are such your sorrows? To travel to England, without a husband to follow is not so great a hardship, especially when that husband would rather stay behind.’

“Bertha looked at the speaker, and met that wonderful gaze. She shuddered, and was silent some moments. Then rising up, she said, gravely,

“‘Madame, I will not leave my husband; he may leave me; then I can only pray for his sin, and remember that they who have caused it are more guilty.’

“I wish she had stopped there; but woman’s jealousy urged a retort, and she added,

“‘I will not go to England without him, because a woman who travels about the world, unprotected and unrecognised, exposes herself to suspicion; and if my husband would rather not go with me, that is only another reason why I should stay with him.’ She then walked out of the room.

“I admired the boldness of her words, yet I looked down, afraid to meet the looks, and, as I expected, the flashing eyes of the indignant Pole, whom they almost insulted.

“I was startled by the pretty, lisping, childish tone in which she sometimes chose to speak,

although nearly quite conversant with our language : at a moment when I expected excitement, it sounded strangely ; she asked,

“ ‘Vitch do you like de best of dese pretty flowers ?’ Her face was as calm and sunny as a summer’s day, and she held in her hand a blue violet, and a splendid scarlet exotic, the name of which I forgot. It was only afterwards that I felt she compared the dissimilar things to Bertha and herself ; but my answer was not perhaps what she expected.

“ ‘The violet,’ I said, ‘because it will be sweet the longest. When the other is dead, it is dead ; the violet is sweet when it dies.’

“ She burst into a laugh ; the first time I had heard her actually laugh.

“ ‘That is such a pretty English idea,’ she said, ‘that it makes one quite laugh : Well, with your good pleasure I will leave them there, and we shall see which will keep sweet the longest.’ And, with the pretty air of a graceful woman doing a childish act, she laid the flowers side by side on the table, and left the room with a bow and a smile.

“ Events now followed each other rapidly among us ; but whatever change came on was unknown to either myself or the mistress of the house until it became self-evident, or was revealed by accident. Henry went and came, as

suited his convenience, without any intimation to his wife ; his uncle did the same ; even in her presence their political plans were freely discussed ; the proceedings of Pope Pius were the engrossing topic of interest, the amnesty—‘ Il perdono ’—was all but conceded, and the Italian openly conversed with Henry on the necessity for secularizing the Roman government. This conversation Bertha listened to with a pious horror : any attempt against the head of her Church was fearfully criminal in her eyes ; and the idea that her husband would be drawn into the designs of his treacherous relative, who, having received his pardon with one hand, would stab the sovereign who gave it with the other, now took sole possession of her mind, and every effort of which she was capable was directed to the prevention of the crime she dreaded.

“ These efforts were cut short. Oh ! how awfully.” Evelyn pressed my hand ; hers was cold as death.

“ Ah ! ” she continued, “ if even now, when viewed in another light, the recollection of that fearful time appals me, what must it have been when you first met with me ? When I tell you all, you will know what I had to suffer. I will go on from the morning after that when the scene between Bertha and her Polish guest occurred which I have just mentioned.

" Although English dress and customs are fashionable in Hungary, Henry had quite cast them off. He bore the name of his father-in-law, dressed in the Hungarian style, and adopted the hideous wiry moustache ; but still he partly retained the comforts of an English breakfast ; and one of his chief household pleasures was to manufacture the coffee himself in a crystal percolator with a double globe, the lower one containing the water, which was boiled by a spirit-lamp ; the upper one the coffee. When the water boiled, it ascended through a tube into the upper globe, and then descended in a clear brown stream, leaving the dregs above.

" On the morning I mention, he found, on entering the room, that the Countess Zarina had usurped his office. She was standing at the head of the table, and the coffee was prepared. I never saw her look so magnificently beautiful ; a consciousness of her own superiority seemed almost to dilate her splendid form, and to array it in an air of greater majesty. Henry forgot his displeasure, and stood gazing upon her, as the sunlight, entering the large window at her back, shed its glory on that dark, yet radiant form, and on the floating waves of her raven hair.

" I had come in and stood in that window,

as I thought, unperceived, and when Henry appeared, she said, in a playful tone,

“ ‘ See, I must do what you leave undone ; you know *caffé au lait* is my passion ; your wife wants her morning cup, and yet you have made us wait. There now, you shall take her that.’

“ He looked at her in surprise.

“ ‘ Yes,’ said she ; ‘ I told you we had a bit of a quarrel yesterday ; that will not do, you must leave us good friends. I will not have you angry with her, for I never bear rancour. There, go, and give her that little comfort before you leave us.’

“ ‘ Are you going away, Henry ? ’ I asked. She started round, and pretended not to know I had been present ; yet I felt her words had been designed for me alone. He replied to me by saying he should be only a few days absent, and went away, as he was desired, with the cup of coffee to Bertha’s closet, who seldom left it before breakfast.

“ ‘ He is not in a very good humour this morning,’ said the Pole ; ‘ he will not let us ask any questions about his journey ; it was by chance I heard him say he was going to Vienna, and should stop at his uncle’s lodgings.’

“ As Henry’s humour was variable indeed,

this appeared a natural speech, and I refrained from asking any questions on his return, which was longer delayed than either of us expected.

"‘What a time you have stayed!’ cried Zarina, with something of anxiety in her voice, as he entered the room. Henry sighed, and sat down to the table in silence.

“‘What is the matter?’ was her hasty, and, for the first time in my presence, imperious demand. He looked up, and spoke a few words in the Hungarian language, which I did not understand; then bending his eyes into the coffee-cup, said in English,

“‘Bertha was delivering me a charge in behalf of the Pope, that was all.’

“Poor girl! touched by his kindness in bringing her that coffee, actuated perhaps by some of those mysterious impressions to which we seldom pay sufficient attention, she had seized on what she hoped was the moment of returning affection, to employ all those soft persuasions which the memory of their early love might lend weight to, in order to lead her husband back to virtue and to God.

“‘You Protestants must not listen to such false teaching as that, I suppose,’ was the remark of the Pole, as she turned a now calmed and smiling face to me.

" 'Are you not a Protestant?' I said.

" 'Oh, yes!' she answered; 'I protest against all tyrants, temporal and spiritual.'

" When Henry had departed, she proposed a ride on horseback, averring that the spirits of the forsaken wife required exercise. Sweet Bertha being pleased with her husband, was pleased with every one else.

" The Countess Zarina, as she styled herself, having dropped her family name to insure her safety in Austria, had been in the habit of spending entire days on horseback, with Henry alone, or in the joint company of their uncle; but since the death of Bertha's father it was evident to me that whatever charm those days had had for him was over. This we accounted for by observing that he was more and more immersed in political schemes, and found in them the excitement and occupation a restless mind desired. Bertha was pleased with the proposition of her guest, as it seemed to prove that her recent abstinence from that favourite exercise arose from Henry's declining to accompany her; and in good spirits we set out together.

" Zarina appeared in her full beauty on horseback; her noble figure, the beam of her large dark eye, her floating hair and graceful costume, were all the *beau idéal* of the trium-

phant Amazon. In spite of ourselves, we were drawn away and captivated by her powers ; her satisfaction with herself never appeared so great as on that day ; and persons unsatisfied with themselves can seldom be really pleasing to others.

" After tea, which we always had in the English fashion, Bertha looked pale and languid. I was but a poor equestrian, yet she seemed to suffer more from the effects of our gallop. She soon complained of feeling unwell ; but when I ascribed it to her ride, the Pole dissented, affirming that such 'a little course' could not have affected her, and that she must have taken something that disagreed with her. Bertha had taken nothing more than usual, and she and I agreed that a night's rest was the best remedy.

" I went to her room early in the morning, to see how she was ; but early as I was, the assiduous Zarina was already there. She told me Bertha was really ill ; I found her feeling her pulse, for she was a sort of general genius, and added great skill in dressing wounds, and a knowledge of chemistry, and of cooking, to her other attainments. I asked if Bertha had taken anything. ' Nothing but water,' was the answer ; ' she was so thirsty,—a little *eau sucrée* ; but the doctor should be sent for.' He was a great dis-

tance off; but a messenger was despatched. He came and prescribed, and agreed with me that the injury had arisen from too violent exercise the day before. His prescriptions were followed, but sweet Bertha faded and faded; scarcely suffering pain, but sinking away before our eyes. Her anxiety for her husband's return became extreme. I had written immediately to the address Zarina gave me, but there came no reply, and he came not. 'My husband! my husband!' was the poor girl's constant but languid cry. What it was that the Pole said in answer to it once I know not, but Bertha, feeble and irritated, dashed away the drink she was presenting to her, and cried again, 'My husband! it is you who keep him from me; he loves me more than he could ever love you.' The woman she thus spoke to bent down her lofty head in silence, until her eyes came on a level with those which would not look up from the pillow to meet them. She looked into them. I was standing beside her, and could not see the nature of that look; but I saw the poor sufferer's vainly endeavouring to escape from it; yet, as if under the power of a fatal fascination, unable to close. At last, with a desperate effort throwing off the bedclothes, Bertha sprang up, and grasping me round the neck, cried,

“ ‘ Save me ! save me from her ; she has killed me ! ’

“ A horrible fear dimly entered my mind. But, looking down calmly on us as Bertha lay on my neck, that woman, with eyes of pity, and, it might seem, forgiveness, said,

“ ‘ Poor thing ! she wants repose ; she is tired too much.’

“ The old governess rose from her seat in a corner of the room. Of late that timid creature had appeared the victim of nervous terrors. She approached the bed, trembling, and waving her hand to Zarina, said falteringly,

“ ‘ Go ! leave us ; save yourselves ; take your bad uncle from here.’

“ Zarina looked at her. The poor old woman shook from head to foot, and dropped upon a seat. That haughty woman bent her head, and saying only ‘ I obey,’ walked out of the room.

“ That night I watched by Bertha. Towards morning she fell asleep ; and, weary with sorrow and want of sleep, both then so unusual to me, I threw myself on a couch and sank into a heavy slumber.

“ Even while still sleeping I was sensible of a whispering sound from the side of Bertha’s bed. Unable quite to rouse myself, I murmured the name of Henry, for I dreamed he was come. The whispering ceased, and a

piercing shriek broke my slumber. I sprung up, and flew round the screen behind which I lay; the Pole was disappearing from the door; she looked back at me, and with a smile of compassion made a graceful movement of her hand, as if either indicating to me the state of the unhappy Bertha, or waving her a farewell. Bertha was sitting straight up in her bed, her arms stretched rigidly out before her, her eyes wildly fixed on vacancy. Thus she continued for some moments, to my inexpressible consternation. I enclosed her in my arms, and strove, by pulling her face down on my bosom, to avert that terrible stare, which appeared to strain her eyeballs to bursting. Her cry, however, brought the old lady to my help, and by mere force we got the wretched sufferer to lie down. When this was done, she drew up the coverlet over her face, and lay there hidden and silent.

“ ‘Her head wanders,’ the governess whispered; ‘let her lie so.’ And for a full hour at least she lay moveless and silent thus. Then, when I moved to look at her, she had changed her attitude, and was kneeling on her bed, her face turned to its head, where a crucifix was suspended.

“ She continued to sink. The priest, who was her friend from infancy, came that day,

and administered the last rites of her Church. We were, as usual, all excluded ; but he heard a long confession, or poor Bertha had much to say.

“ Twilight had drawn on ; that solemn, silent hour, which harmonizes best with the advent of death. I was sitting beside the sweet friend of my youth, who had caused herself to be wrapped in a loose robe, and laid upon a couch ; she was scarcely breathing, and the old lady, who sat weeping at a greater distance, thought she was no longer sensible.

“ But Bertha suddenly put out her hand, and, taking mine,

“ ‘ Evelyn,’ she said, ‘ will *your* religion allow you to think that the salvation of a soul is worth temporal suffering, is worth the denial of one’s self ? ’

“ ‘ Oh yes ! ’ I answered.

“ ‘ Could you devote yourself to save a soul, even to try to save one, though some risk, some trial, perhaps some suspicion, which is harder to bear, were to be involved in the maintenance of your object ? ’

“ ‘ I hope so ; yes,’ I added, gathering strength, for who in the presence of death could avoid yielding an assent ; ‘ yes, by God’s help I could.’

“ She rose up with a preternatural strength,

and taking my arm, led me, rather than being supported by me, through the long narrow passage that communicated with the chapel. There kneeling at the altar, she prayed, or rather spoke her thoughts aloud ; and then she asked me if I could devote myself to the performance of her dying wishes. I answered yes. She then made me take that solemn vow to secrecy which was so long the cause of my mystery and misery. As long as her husband lived, she asked me to promise never, except in the confessional, to reveal the disclosures she was about to make. Why she made that exception I know not, for she knew I was not disposed to embrace her religion ; yet you remember how often I have alluded to the confessional as the only channel by which I could unburthen my heart, and obtain the advice I needed. Sweet Bertha then, with the calmness of a spirit released from earth, and only pitying its sins and weaknesses, revealed to me the horrible fact that the haughty, implacable Zarina had come to her slumbering pillow, while I too slept, to impart to her the fatal intelligence that her husband—dear Frank's beloved brother—was a double murderer ; that his hand had mingled the draught that destroyed her father ; and that he had brought to her the coffee which was drugged with a more subtle and slower poison ; that

she—Zarina—the scorned and wandering exile—had been his first love, and plighted bride, and stood triumphant at the last, adding this deepest misery to the young wife's dying hour.

"But love is stronger than death. That young dying wife made me vow, not only to conceal her husband's crime while he lived, and to screen him from its just penalty, but to seek his restoration; to watch over him as in her stead, and as under the guidance of her spirit; never to breathe to his brother or his friends the nature of the course he had pursued, but so to win him back by the power I should have over him through the knowledge I possessed, that finally I might restore him to his country and his friends.

"'Henry,' she said, 'will go to Rome, for there will be the scene of his uncle's efforts; there let yours be also. Evelyn, you now know all, and knowing it, promise me again before I die, that you will seek to save my husband.'

"I bowed my knees, and promised it," said Evelyn, bursting into a flood of tears, which reminded me of old times.

"Now, my friend, you know the cause of my mysteries. I promised it, because the angel-spirit that was departing told me to do so. I promised, because I believed that if the spirit of him I loved—the man of God—were hover-

ing round us, it would whisper, Do so ; and I promised it because I thought that the spirit of Him who expired with a prayer for his murderers called on me to do so.

“ Yet, I did not then reflect ; I did not then know all that the promise would involve me in ; I did not see that it placed a gulf between me and the brother of the man I would screen or save ; that my actions might be misinterpreted, my conduct never understood ; that candour and confidence between us must thenceforth be at an end. It was only slowly, and when I was able to reflect, that this fact became more and more legible to me ; and I felt that if I would preserve my vow I must avoid the man from whom I had all my life anxiously desired to have no secret.

“ With a smile, like that of a vanishing angel, Bertha passed from my side ; I stood a moment with perhaps a more worldly thought in my heart, and when I looked round I saw that dreadful man—the conspirator of Rome—retiring with his cat-like pace from behind one of the pillars of the chapel. He thought I had gone with Bertha. I was terrified ; it was only at Venice I discovered that in the story she told me there was a fresh conspiracy, and that he and his fatal associate had wished me to receive this version of it in order that their unfortunate

victim should be irrevocably in their power. They did not, could not, imagine a love so pure and self-sacrificing as that of Bertha's, nor ever calculated on a step so unlike all their own hearts could devise, as that of binding me to save and shelter, instead of criminat-ing her husband. Not that they wished to deliver him to justice as a substitute for themselves ; they wanted only to separate him for ever from his family, oblige him to dispose of his wife's pro-perty, and devote it to their purposes.

“Sweet Bertha died the next morning, and died praying to Christ for herself and her hus-band ; trusting to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world ; and, amid many and gross errors, I believe numbers of her Church have done the same.

“Her husband was still absent, and I thought then I knew the cause. That was a terrible moment. The old lady who was with me, when I was for the first time in my life in the presence of a corpse,—for I had not courage enough to see the first that was in that house,—did not know what I knew, but she knew perhaps still more. She knew of my poor aunt's death, and knew that she had not been the writer of the letters her sister had received. The Italian and the Pole entered the chamber of death just as Bertha breathed her last ; and the old woman,

embracing the body, cried aloud that they were the murderers.

" She had not seen them, and her horror was excessive when she did. I felt as if her doom was sealed. Full of nervous terrors, she determined to fly from the house. I was most anxious to stay till Henry's return ; but she persuaded me it would be better to meet him in Vienna. I thought so too ; terror had seized on my mind, and the desire of escaping from that dreadful woman and her associate rendered me almost incapable of reflecting on the nature of the promise I had made. Having seen dear Bertha prepared for the tomb, we stole from the house that night ; one of Bertha's old domestics had a carriage ready ; and, with only a small bundle of clothes, we arrived in Vienna, and there found that the address the Pole had given me was false, and Henry had never been there. Perplexed, confused, dreading to be left alone, I saw no resource but in continuing the route the old Swedish lady was resolved to pursue, without even stopping throughout it. Her desire to get to her country was extreme. We hurried on, I, thinking that when once in peace and safety, I could better resolve on what to do ; indeed, I was then incapable of a steady thought. But I knew that Henry was only known to this old lady by the title of his father-in-law, that she was not

aware of his guilt ; and thus I saw, that by being at liberty to speak of the circumstances that had occurred, she might be of essential service to me without implicating him. Besides, as she would not stop with me, I dared not stay alone. We went on, therefore, rapidly to Ystad ; but there, you know, either from the effect of terror, or from the same cruel potion that had killed her lovely pupil, the poor old lady died, speechless, like Bertha's father, like unhappy Henry's aunt, just as the young baron arrived to convey us to his mother. If she could have spoken, my fate would have been different ; I should then have had the privilege of his help, his sympathy ; he could have procured me information without endangering the actual criminal : but she could not do so ; she died in trying to do so ; and I was left a forlorn, embarrassed, bewildered wanderer, standing with that noble young man beside her lifeless body. I was bound to silence, which left me an isolated being. My desire for community of feeling rendered me apprehensive even of the approaches of friendship. I feared to betray, yet hated to conceal. I was doomed to mystery, and lived under the additional burden of not knowing how to perform my vow. I dared not go back to Hungary ; my letters were unanswered, for they never reached Henry.

“ Soon after my arrival at Stockholm I wrote

to my step-aunt, accounting for my visit there by saying that she had not wished me to return to her, and to stay where I had been, after Bertha's death, was impossible. I stated, with a boldness totally foreign to my feelings while writing, my intention of remaining abroad, and my desire that my little income should be remitted through a banker of Paris. She never had any legal power over me; but she still, as the aunt of Frank, and as my only superior relative, possessed over me a moral control, which my unhappy circumstances alone made me appear to break. Thus did care and gloom early settle around me; and in God alone was my confidence, for I felt that vain was the help of man.

“ Finding my letters to Henry were unanswered, I opened a correspondence with the priest who had served the chapel at Bertha's house. By his means I was furnished with occasional information as to the movements of the party; I heard that his uncle had been restored as one of the amnestied; had bathed the good Pope's feet with tears, and told him he might now claim his life, since he had given him back to his country. It was his letter I got at Prague; and finding Zarina and the Italian were there, and not Henry, I fled from thence. Guided thus by the re-

ports he made me, I knew when I ought to be in Rome, and was the means of bringing you there in the height of summer. Yet my meeting with that terrible man in the Colosseum was totally unexpected. You often said I looked apprehensive in the streets of Rome; but I had no apprehension when I entered that dark passage until I saw the moonlight gleaming on that face. Then I screamed aloud. He was probably there to meet some one else.

“ Yet still I knew not where Henry was: the very day when I first met you in the Djürgard, dear Frank had not only, as I told you, written to ask my promise to be his wife, but mentioned incidentally that his brother, in deep grief for the loss of his young wife, had gone on a distant course of eastern travel. I only saw by this that Henry wished to evade the compunction caused by his brother’s letters; or to deceive him as to his career.

“ But on the day when we were in Santa Maria Maggiore, I saw the priest with whom I had been in correspondence in Hungary, and saw that he was trying to reach me; the crowd prevented him; but when you said you had been traced to our abode, I readily conjectured that he had seen you with me, and wanted to know where I was. He was, in

fact, charged with a message from Henry: I found from him that the unfortunate man was at Venice. The evening when you were a witness to our meeting in San Marco was the second of our interviews. In the first I had obtained the wonderful, the blessed knowledge, that Henry was totally innocent of his poor wife's death; that he had only hesitated to bring her the cup of coffee because he feared by doing so to excite the jealousy of the cruel woman who prepared it; but had never suspected that she barbarously employed his hand to destroy the sweet girl who so tenderly loved him.

"I had no idea that my promise of secrecy as to Bertha's communication extended to him; I therefore told him all; her whole conduct, and the promise she had exacted from me. She did what she engaged me to do—the relation of her dying hour led her husband to repentance. You saw the penitent of St. Mark's!

"It was then first that he knew for a certainty that Bertha had been sacrificed by the vindictive Zarina.

"But there was one part of the dreadful story from which he could not clear himself—his hand had mingled the draught that killed her father. He declared that he did so on the

assurance of his uncle and the Pole, that it would have the effect of confusing his memory, so that he should be unable to alter the disposition of his property, as he intended to do the following day. Henry's anxiety to prevent this step led him to adopt their device; but his life in consequence became much more clearly in their hands than theirs were in his. It was to caution and to time, then, that we could alone trust for the evolution of events; at least Henry thought so, and his entreaty to me was to preserve silence and to avoid meeting his brother. I renewed to him the promise I had made to his wife—you saw me do so—and soon after I met Frank in the catacombs!

“I had been previously charged with a communication to the pontiff; I was too late, yet I was able to give him some useful information; to him, as to ‘the priest of the Quirinal,’ I also revealed my whole story, recollecting that Bertha had given me leave to do so in the confessional. He became interested for Henry; he assured me his designing relative would shortly bring his career to a close, and advised me to withdraw from Rome, and leave the matter in his hands, giving him only information where I could be found on a short notice. Thus you told me I was happy; I was so, for my shut-up heart had been opened, and the

horrors it had fostered melted comparatively into shadows. But at that moment Frank came in the way. My only resource was to get out of his. Go where I would, except into a convent, I knew he would follow. I went to one, therefore. ‘The priest at the Quirinal,’ and the confessor at the convent, who styled him so, were the only persons in the secret. Residing there under powerful protection, I had nothing to fear, although your solicitudes were gratefully felt. Henry came to Rome, and it was so arranged for me, that I was able to meet him without exciting suspicion. Frank had gone wandering to Jerusalem, thinking his brother might be there, while he was actually left behind in Italy. I resigned hope for myself; I should have done so long before, but for your torturing though affectionate anxieties. Now I had seen that he hated secrecy and mystery more deeply than ever; and even were his brother restored, I felt that these must cling about me with regard to the full details of the past; but when this prospect appalled me, I recalled dear Bertha’s dying words, ‘Will your religion allow you to think that the salvation of a soul is worth temporal suffering?’ Ah! yes, I would then say to myself; she fancied our faith was one of ease and self-

indulgence. Her spirit may now see that I, while professing it, can renounce temporal happiness to myself for the spiritual happiness of her husband.

"But Henry left Rome, and I was nearly sinking to despair. I thought he was lost again. I thought my self-sacrifice had been indeed offered, but no flame descended to consume it. God was better than all my fears; the dart had already fastened in a sure place; poor Henry found no rest in the home of his murdered wife, and in the now hateful society of the cruel Pole. Hungary was up in arms; he had been summoned there for the disposal of his little remaining property; it was nearly consumed to forward the schemes of others. He sold the remnant; and, believing that if he left the proceeds with the guilty pair, his vow of poverty would give them little uneasiness, he parted, after a violent scene, from the Countess Zarina, and proceeded back to Rome, intending to end his days in a monastery of the strictest rule; for when he awoke to a sense of religion, he embraced that of his wife, whose death rendered her dearer to him than her life had ever done. With this view he sought an interview with the Pope before coming to me. But his purpose had been mistaken; his truthfulness never in the least believed. Revenge

and jealousy tracked his steps, and on the Quirinal Hill, just by that old building where you and I have sometimes loitered, the unfortunate victim of his own errors and of the guilt of others was stabbed—stabbed, we have reason to believe, by the very hand that led him to ruin.

“He was generally supposed to be only ‘a spy of Austria :’ as an Englishman, his murder would have caused a sensation. A monk who had seen him at the Papal palace recognised him ; he was brought to an adjoining house, and the authority that protected me soon caused me to be informed of the event. Attended by a lay sister, who indeed proved a sister of charity to me, I went to that house. Poor Henry was not dead ; and, but for the fever that ensued, the wound, though deep, might not have been fatal. He lived some time, and lived to give proofs of penitence and faith.

“How strange are the coincidences of life ! The combinations it presents are surely not the result of chance.

“Frank had been on his journey eastward, when, impressed with I know not what idea, he turned back and went to Hungary, resolved to trace out the husband of his aunt the countess, to whose care I had been confided. The result of his investigations naturally filled

him with suspicion, and with fear for me. He hastened back to Rome, and wro'e me a note demanding an answer to a few brief questions, which he thought I could not refuse to give. Poor fellow ! it was a cruel note ;"—but as she said the word, Evelyn pressed my hand, and added, "I don't mean that, you know ; but I believe that men never quite understand what wounds us so much ; and besides, he was justified—ah ! justified in thinking anything. I was sitting by his brother's dying bed when I got that note, sent to me from the convent. I put it silently into his hand ; perhaps I was wrong, weak, at least, in so doing ; but my heart was stung, my faith wavered. I resolved not to answer it, nor to see Frank again.

" Henry said nothing, but shortly afterwards desired to be left alone with the priest, who attended him. In a short time I was summoned again ; the priest had left him. His wound required to be dressed ; it was in the side, near the region of the heart. I was bending over him, for he liked me to perform the operation. Thus, with my head bent over him, I was indeed aware that some one came in and stood at my side, but I thought it was the priest returned. Henry's face was directed the other way ; when I rose up, there stood Frank—his brother had sent for him !

“ We had met once in the tombs,” cried dear Evelyn, with another burst of tears, throwing herself once more into my arms, and hiding her sweet eyes, while smiles, which mingled irrepressible happiness with recollections of grief and terror, wreathed her beautiful lips ;—“ we had met once in the tombs, and now we met in the presence of death ! But now all doubt, all mystery, suspicion, or fear, were forgotten. I was held to the heart that loved me, and we both felt that nothing more could divide us. Yet nothing was then explained,—nothing cleared up ; I would still have saved poor Frank from sorrow, the dying Henry from pain. But death is a great teacher, the grand expositor of life ! Henry was no longer appalled by the sight of that calm, pure countenance which had haunted him in his more active days. He was so near to eternity, that even the terrible things of time looked but as shadows. He sent me from the room, and he told all, which I did not know till then, relating to that splendid Pole, to his brother, together with the chief circumstances I have related to you,—my vow, my conduct in endeavouring to maintain it. Thus the unhappy Henry’s last act was one of restitution ; it restored me to Frank, Frank to me.”

“ Ah !” I said, “ since such is the end of your

mysteries, I am content. But go on ; though content, I can hear more."

"I have little more to say. Aided by his brother's prayers, the wandering brother approached his last hour. The hand that had led him to sin and error brought him to an untimely grave. Frank temporarily stifled his anguish at the dreadful disclosures he had heard, in order to be assured that poor Henry died a penitent and a believer, looking for the mercy of God through the grace of Christ.

"We knelt in prayer beside him ;—but at that moment the thunder of musketry shook the small tenement in which we were lodged. An every-day crowd had again followed poor Pio Nono, clamouring for a constitution. Cicero- uacchio had paid him many visits, and sometimes taken upon himself to disperse the people, because *il buon Papa* was fainting, and could not give them his blessing. But this time they did not want the benedizione ; a whole armed force had succeeded the first crowd ; the army had *fraternised* ; the Quirinal was besieged. Rossi's murder had been the preliminary. You know how the Roman conspirators of the former time clamoured when you were there, for the dismissal of the Swiss guards, and how the good-hearted Pope took a midway course, by dismissing the Protestants from among them. Ah !

those brave Protestant hearts would have defended him as well as the hundred Catholic ones did, who alone withstood the angry masses who roared against the palace of the peace-loving Pius IX. But certainly if the Romans had had any design of capturing the amiable, benevolent, liberal-minded, and holy-living priest to whom they owed allegiance as their sovereign, they could have done so, notwithstanding the brave defence of his devoted Swiss guard. They did not want to do so. But on went this fearful tumult, this terrible sight for all believers in Rome to behold ; and while it went on, and while the musketry shook our lowlier dwelling, we knelt around the bed of death—the death of a contrite sinner—our hearts hushed to silent awe, as if in the very presence of our God ; and again a shock made us start, and made that sinking frame to quiver, and again we were still.

“ Dear friend, I can tell you no more ; poor Frank will be grieved if he finds me agitated ; he likes to see me what I was before we first parted ; now I must not let him see your Guido’s portrait. Here let all our mysteries and miseries end. That erring, but, we trust, pardoned man, lies in a nameless grave—at his own desire it is nameless—in the pretty English burying-ground at Rome. He was laid there amid all the strange, but not unprecedented, tumult

that shook the Eternal City ; that very day the misled Pope Pius fled in disguise from Rome.

“ Ill and dreadfully agitated as my poor Frank was,” said Evelyn, looking once more deprecatingly at me, “ even you, perhaps, will think that I ought not to have refused to fly with him also from the tumultuous and almost bewildered city. An English lady had just carried off the Pope in her carriage, and I, therefore, thought propriety allowed me to let poor Frank carry off me in his. He was indeed, I believe, more miserable than than Pio Nono. He is now restored : we were married at Naples, where Geraldine and Albert were married, and we saw the illustrious exile at Mola di Gaeta, and he did not excommunicate us. Now, dearest, forget my troubles, think only of my happiness ; bless God for me, who has thus brought light out of darkness, joy out of deep sorrow ; and oh ! pray that I may live to show forth his praise, not only with my lips, but in my life.”

And once more the dear, tender girl was pressed to my heart, and once more—for the last time, perhaps—our tears were mingled.

“ But here is Frank !” cried Evelyn, lifting her head at the sound of a step unheard by me, and looking all radiant in smiles and beauty, as her soft brown eyes, and beautiful hair, and glowing cheeks, all seemed to be made up of

smiles and tears, sorrow and joy, agitation and happiness ; “ he must not think me sorrowful : —dear Frank ! he has suffered so much, acted so nobly. He likes to think I have forgotten my sufferings.”*

And, as he came to the door, she ran to meet him, crying,

“ Just in time ! not a minute too soon or too late ; come in, and help me to persuade her to join us on our visit to Albert and Geraldine—Mr. and Mrs. O’Donnell, I ought to call them to you—to see their model estate for Ireland, and their open church, and all their new inventions, even to the art of living in peace ; though, I believe, there has been a droll little bit of a rebellion around them, has there not ? But, no matter, I must go there, to show dear, good, worthy Aunt Patrick that I am not a Papist, and that I won’t be a nun ! ”

And the naughty girl, whose whole heart was turned to the lightening of her husband’s cares, shook her lovely head quite almost against the smiling face that now beamed upon her as I had once seen it beam before.

“ And then she shall come with us—shall she not, sposo ? —to Sweden, and see Oscar, and Lilla, and Fru P. and ”—

“ Oh ! Oh ! Oh ! ” I cried ; “ stop there ! that is all for the present ! Only stay in Stockholm

till next winter, then I will run after you, if I skate all the way ; and we shall be in the baron's sledge again ! ”—

My hands clapped together involuntarily ; Frank opened his grave blue eyes, and looked as if he feared I was actually going to shout “ Hurrah for the Mälar ;” but his concern for the lovely wife who stood smiling beside him was allayed, when, with more characteristic sobriety, I added,

“ Stay there till next winter ; then, if I am not able to pick up gold dust in California, I will go to Sweden, and compose there a second edition of our journey from Stockholm to Rome, for I fear this ends like a mere novel.”

But till then, joy be with the first ! Peace be with thee, sweet Evelyn.

THE END.

